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LETTERS FROM MEMBERS OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT'S FAMILY

Bruno's own, Sir, & Roger Pope's, which
together to write down neatly, & in good
spelling the following particulars.

Whether his reign was peaceful or
warlike.

If warlike with whom he was at
war particularly whether with his
own subjects or 'foreign' nations
Also whether he was victorious in
battle (generally) or defeated.

Whether any great alterations of govt.
permanent local place in his reign
such as they were.

Whether he was a good man or a
bad.

Whether ~~his~~ the conduct of his sub-
jects ~~was~~ was improved or became
worse under his reign.

LETTERS

HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED, WRITTEN
BY MEMBERS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT'S
FAMILY TO THEIR OLD GOVERNESS

Edited, with an Introduction and Notes, by
THE WARDEN OF WADHAM COLLEGE
OXFORD



LONDON

E. GRANT RICHARDS

7 CARLTON STREET, S.W.

1905

Bernard's essay, George Rogers Paper in 1866;
Sophia to write down neatly, Van good
spelling the following particulars.
Whether his suggestion, successful or

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INTRODUCTION

THE letters which follow were written to Miss Millar, who was the governess of Sir Walter Scott's daughters for several years before 1817. She was treated by all the members of the family with unvarying courtesy and kindness, and became their friend. The correspondence extended, as these letters show, over more than twenty years—from 1814 to 1837. Miss Millar at her death in 1860 left the letters to my aunt, in whose grandfather's family she had been governess and a valued friend. On my aunt's death the letters came into my hands. By the kind permission of Mr. David Chrystal, to whom they now belong, I am enabled to publish them. Miss Millar had parted with all but one of the letters written to her by Sir Walter Scott. There is nothing else of his in this small collection, save a paper

of instructions to his daughter Sophia, written probably in 1810 or 1811, when she was beginning to learn history.

The letters are, most of them, about what might be called trivial matters, but they are bright and humorous, and go to justify the saying that women, old or young, excel men in letter-writing—excel them in simplicity; in making much of little things; in freedom from literary airs and graces; in good nature, on the whole; in cheerfulness and other good qualities; though not in pedantic accuracy as regards grammar and spelling, of which our grandmothers and great-grandmothers made light.

There are other letters of a different kind written in times of trial, when embarrassments, failing health, and bereavement visited Abbotsford; letters which show the resolute endurance in trouble which is the noblest form of courage, that greatest of the virtues, and parent of them all.

The value of the collection consists in

its showing that a man of genius can be a good father of a family. There is no contradiction *in adjecto* between genius and duty, or even respectability, but in many quarters there lingers the mischievous superstition that a great man is above duty, especially the simple duties of a home. With a little ingenuity, however, the *Ueber-Mensch* might be shown to be as ridiculous as the 'good family man'; less useful, and even more odious; an ideal neither realisable, nor worth realising. The letters give a charming picture of an affectionate and happy circle. They confirm the account given by Lockhart of the relations between Sir Walter and his children, and of his theory and practice in the matter of their education.

'No father ever devoted more time and tender care to his offspring than he did to each of his, as they successively reached the age when they could listen to him, and understand his talk. Like their mute playmates, Camp and the greyhounds, they had at all times free access to his study.

He never considered their tattle as any disturbance; he was always ready to answer their questions, and when they, unconscious how he was engaged, entreated him to lay down his pen and tell them a story, he would take them on his knee, repeat a ballad or a legend, kiss them, and set them down again to their marbles or nine-pins, and resume his labour, as if refreshed by the interruption. He considered it as the highest duty as well as the sweetest pleasure of a parent to be the companion of his children.'

Scott's views on education are very plain and practical, and much below the modern standard, or above it. His sons he sent to his own old school—the famous High School of Edinburgh—to learn perhaps, among other things, how to bear themselves bravely as he had done in desperate 'bickers,' if bickers then there were.

In regard to his daughters, 'he had a horror of boarding-schools; never allowed his girls to learn anything out of his own house, and chose their governess, Miss

Millar, who about this time (1808) was domesticated with them, and never left them while they needed one, with a far greater regard to her kind good temper, and excellent moral and religious principles, than to the measure of her attainments in what are called fashionable accomplishments. Though he regretted the irregularity of his own education, he never showed much concern about regulating systematically what is usually called education in the case of his own children. It seemed, on the contrary, as if he attached little importance to anything else, so he could perceive that the young curiosity was excited, the intellect, by whatever springs of interest, was set in motion. He detested and despised the whole generation of modern children's books, in which the attempt is made to convey accurate notions of scientific minutiae; delighting cordially, on the other hand, in those of the preceding age, which, addressing themselves chiefly to the imagination, obtain through it, as he believed, the best chance of stirring our

graver faculties also. He exercised the memory by selecting for tasks of recitation passages of popular verse the most likely to catch the fancy of the children, and gradually familiarised them with the ancient history of their own country by arresting attention in the course of his own oral narrations on incidents and characters of a similar description. His Sunday talk was just such a series of biblical lessons as that which we have preserved for the permanent use of rising generations in the *Tales of a Grandfather* on the early history of Scotland. He had his Bible, the Old Testament especially, by heart, and on these days inwove the simple pathos, or sublime enthusiasm of Scripture, in whatever story he was telling, with the same picturesque richness as he did in his week-day tales, the quaint Scotch of Pitscottie, or some rude romantic old rhyme from Barbour's *Bruce* or Blind Harry's *Wallace*. By many external accomplishments, either in girl or boy, he set little store. He delighted to hear his daughters sing an old

ditty, or one of his own framing; but so the singer appeared to feel the spirit of her ballad, he was not at all critical of the technical execution. There was one thing, however, on which he fixed his heart hardly less than the ancient Persians of the *Cyropædia*; like them, next to love of truth, he held love of horsemanship for the prime point of education. As soon as his eldest girl could sit a pony, she was made the regular attendant of his mountain rides; and they all, as they attained sufficient strength, had the like advancement. He taught them to think nothing of tumbles, and habituated them to his own reckless delight in perilous fords and flooded streams; and they all imbibed in great perfection his passion for horses—as well, I may venture to add, as his deep reverence for the more important article of that Persian training. “Without courage,” he said, “there cannot be truth, and without truth there can be no other virtue.”¹

¹ Vol. ii., pp. 26-28, chap. xvii.

NOTE.—My references are to Mr. Pollard's edition of the

Such is Lockhart's account of Scott's theory and practice in regard to the education of his children. They must have been very happy; happier than John Stuart Mill, nearly their contemporary, who was receiving an education only too systematic and complete. They, the girls at least, could look back on their childhood and youth without shuddering at dismal memories of irregular French verbs, painfully learned and happily forgotten; or of dreary hours wasted in efforts to acquire 'execution' on the pianoforte.

They lived with their parents, and knew them as companions. Their education was a stimulating one, a training of body and mind; of all their mental faculties, not merely of their memories. Do we, who think or talk more about education than did our forefathers, know better than they

Life, in five volumes, in Messrs. Macmillan's 'Library of English Classics'; but for the benefit of those who possess only the older editions, I have added the numbers of the chapters, which are the same in all editions. The reference to chapters is of course somewhat vague, but I do not regret such vagueness, should it tempt or compel any one to hunt through a chapter for each quotation.

how to bring up boys and girls? It may be said, of course, that such an education demands, if it is to succeed, parents, children, and surroundings of an uncommon kind, and is an ideal impossible to realise. Yet certain excellences in it, whether attainable or not, are indispensable. But the writer must refrain from pursuing the many reflections suggested here. He will content himself with expressing his wonder whether among the children's books which Scott detested were numbered the stories written by Mrs. Sherwood? Did he include in his condemnation the *Stories of Cawn-pore* and the *Fairchild Family*, or did he, as children do, love the story and hate, or ignore, the somewhat dreary moral lessons, such, for instance, as are appended to the tales of the quarrel between Henry and his sisters, and of Emily's theft of damascenes? For Miss Edgeworth's genius he had the highest admiration. 'He avowed¹ that he should never in all likelihood have thought of a Scotch novel had he not

¹ Vol. ii., pp. 486-7, chap. xxxiii.

read Maria Edgeworth's exquisite pieces of Irish character. "There is a richness and *naïveté*," he is reported to have said—and here Scotchmen will protest—"in Irish character and humour, in which the Scotch are certainly defective." He therefore read with much delight, and made his children read, *Rosamond* and the *Purple Jar* and *Simple Susan*; even, perhaps, the conversations on scientific subjects between Harry and Lucy and their father, though in the character and teaching of that amazing parent Scott found much room for criticism.¹ Was *Sandford and Merton* read at Ashestiel and Abbotsford? and, if it was, what did they think of Mr. Barlow? One chapter in that curious book Scott, and perhaps his children, must have much enjoyed: that in which is told the story of the fight between young Nash and Sandford, who showed himself to be a 'human boy' for once; cool and resolute, like Dobbin in the great fight with Cuff. This lapse into barbarism redeems much

¹ Vol. iv., p. 314, chap. lxiii.; and vol. v., p. 380, chap. lxxxi.

in Day and his impossible hero, and mitigates the superiority of these too superior persons.

Of Miss Millar the writer has an indistinct remembrance. He was taken to see her several times when she lived in Edinburgh. She was a benevolent old lady, simple and kindly, fond of young people, somewhat didactic, more accustomed probably to talk to girls than to boys, who, being non-moral and unimpressible to the verge of cynicism, are not easily moved by conversation meant to improve them ; though they will bear much from a hostess mindful of their creature comforts, who presses them to eat in the hospitable, though sometimes embarrassing, fashion of fifty years ago. Miss Millar was a comely old lady with large bright brown eyes, now to the writer suggestive of that shrewdness and humour which win young people. She could not have been a stupid person to whom her pupils wrote playful as well as affectionate letters. She was devoted to Sir Walter Scott, and a little afraid, surely

needlessly, of the great man. One story—a true one—used to be told by her, illustrative of this timorous affection. She had long wished to have a lock of his hair, but dared not ask for it. She obtained it by an innocent stratagem, and the connivance of the barber who came to Ashes-tiel or Abbotsford to cut Sir Walter's hair when Lady Scott was not able to perform that office. After the operation was over, and Scott had left the room, Miss Millar entered it and stole—was it a theft?—some of the hair which lay on the carpet. 'A bird'—probably the barber—'carried the matter.' Sir Walter heard with much amusement of this second 'Rape of the Lock.' He sent for Miss Millar and, to her confusion and delight, gave her a lock of his hair cut by himself, which is now in the possession of the writer.

After she left the Scott family she had varying fortunes, and suffered under pupils, boarders, and lodgers, comforted by never-failing kindness and sympathy

from Abbotsford, and always cheerful and courageous. The last fifteen or twenty years of her life she spent in Edinburgh in fairly comfortable circumstances, visited by many friends, to whom she was always ready to speak of her experiences, especially of the happiest of them, those connected with Ashestiel and Abbotsford. She died, as far as the writer can recollect, in 1860, when she had probably passed her eightieth year. Sir Walter's appreciation of Miss Millar's worth is shown by the letter inserted here: it was written when the effort must have cost him much, for he was weak and in pain, slowly recovering from a serious illness.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—The recommendation you ask of me is an act of such very common justice that I would have sent it by return of post, had I not still felt some pain in stooping to write, although my general health is much improved. I can, with the utmost truth, bear witness to your kind and constant attention to the education of my family during a space of eight or nine years, when they acquired by your instructions, reading, writing, arithmetic, and the elementary parts of music, and of the French language. Mrs. Scott and I had

the utmost reason to be satisfied, not only with your mode of teaching and the instructions which you conveyed to our children, but by your very ladylike and prudent conduct while we had the pleasure of having you for our inmate, a circumstance which is at least of as much importance to the master and mistress of a family as the extent of knowledge and the facility of communicating it.

In short, my dear Miss Millar, as I always considered my children as fortunate in being under the charge of a person of your good sense and excellent principles, I shall always feel it a small discharge of the debt which I owe you if I can be of any service to you in your progress through life, and I beg you will freely have recourse to me. I will be happy to give more full explanations and details of your mode of teaching to any person who may wish to make further inquiries. I should have mentioned the elements of drawing and the usual kinds of needlework among the arts you had the goodness to teach my young folk. You will perhaps have observed that Walter is gazetted cornet in the XVIII. Hussars. It is so difficult to get into the army just now, that I reckon myself very lucky in the countenance of the Commander-in-Chief, who gave him a preference over many other applicants. He leaves us in about a fortnight to join the regiment at Cork. The girls are well, and great comforts to me in my broken and twilight state of health, so different from that which you remember my enjoying. But God's will be done. I have

had my day of strength and health, having scarce known illness from 15 to 48. All here join in kindest love, and hope next season (if not this) you will manage to pay us a visit here. You would hardly know the place, and we have plenty of room, in which you know we used to be rather deficient. Believe me most truly, dear Miss Millar, your affectionate and obliged friend and servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

ABBOTSFORD, 8th July 1819.

The letters explain themselves, and need little or no commentary. The allusions to persons, places, and events, can easily be understood by any lover of Scott who knows his Lockhart's *Life*, and will refresh his memory by reference to that book. The letters are some of them undated, and their date is a matter of inference from their contents. Some allusions could be intelligible only to those who possess an intimate knowledge of the family history. And here I wish to express my sense of the kindness of the Hon. Mrs. Maxwell Scott, Sir Walter's great-granddaughter, who has seen these letters, and given her approval of their publication. She has

expressed her pleasure and interest in reading them, and has given me help, and promised more, in explaining things which without such help would have remained obscure. But she is in no degree responsible for errors or shortcomings due to haste or ignorance on the part of the writer, who neither admires, nor possesses, nor, if he possessed, would display the erudition which is apt to obscure a text with superfluous and distracting explanations.

He might have added much from the *Abbotsford Notanda* of Mr. Robert Carruthers, which are appended to the short and useful memoir of Sir Walter Scott, written by Mr. Robert Chambers. Carruthers had access to the correspondence and other papers of William Laidlaw, one of Scott's most intimate friends.

It is an easier and more profitable task than elaborate annotation to treat these letters as offering us glimpses, or more than glimpses, into the family life and characters of their writers. Of the forty-

seven letters, twenty-eight were written by Charlotte Sophia Scott, born in 1799; twelve by Anne Scott, born in 1803. Washington Irving¹ describes the sisters as he saw them in 1817 when they were young girls; Sir Walter's—

‘ Imps, hardy, bold, and wild,
As best befits the mountain child.’²

‘ As they approached, the dogs all sprang forward and gambolled around them. They joined us with countenances full of health and glee. Sophia, the eldest, was the most lively and joyous, having much of her father’s varied spirit in conversation, and seeming to catch excitement from his words and looks; Anne was of a quieter mood, rather silent, owing in some measure, no doubt, to her being some years younger.’ Anne was then between fourteen and fifteen, an age when girls, in the presence of strangers, do not speak much, but think the more: she was probably

¹ Vol. iii., p. 135-6, chap. xxxix.

² *Marmion*, Introduction to Canto I.

‘taking in’ Washington Irving, and dissecting him with the sharp and ruthless wit of clever maidens of that by no means tender age. One may remark in passing that Irving’s ‘appreciation’ of Scott is one of the most genial and penetrating which we have on record.

The two sisters resembled each other in many respects: both were bright and humorous girls, full of the high spirits of youth, devoted to their father, and proud of him; comforts to him ‘in sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.’ Yet it is possible to perceive, or imagine, differences between them. The elder of the two, called in the family Sophia to distinguish her from her mother, Charlotte Margaret Scott, is shown by her letters to have been thoughtful, steadfast, kindly, ‘douce’—to use the pretty Scotch term, which can no more be defined than can ‘pawky’ be defined, that mysterious word which puzzles Southerners. She must have been, during the last years of her unmarried life, the leader of the family. To her fell the

task, which in every family is tacitly assigned to the fittest, of writing of deaths and troubles, and all important matters. To Miss Millar, the poor old governess, who must have been sometimes troublesome, she showed inexhaustible kindness and patience, as might have been expected from her father's daughter. Her gravity and commonsense were frequently illumined by flashes of fun and sarcasm. She, like Anne, had for her brothers, especially for Walter, that mixture of love, admiration, and contempt, which are the notes of genuine sisterly affection. In Letter v. she promises Miss Millar 'the felicity of seeing your elegant pupil Walter in his yeomanry dress, which I can assure you he is not a little vain of.' In Letter ix. she expresses her fear that the cornet gazetted to the 18th Light Hussars will 'die of pride and conceit before he joins one of the most dashing regiments in the service.' She loves 'dancing to the pipes every night in the new dining-room,' and (v. Letter iv.) she

‘only hopes she may get half as many beaux in Edinburgh as she has had in the country.’ In letter No. VII. she shows her pride in the beauty of her sister, who ‘is grown up a handsome girl, and is much admired,’ and who, happily, has her faults; for she is a poor correspondent; perhaps too fastidious about her writing and spelling, for ‘the fair authoress’ has in her sister’s sight been destroying ‘three different epistles.’

The other side of Sophia’s character is shown in Letters XIII., XXV., and XXXIII. She writes to her governess about her engagement to Lockhart in simple and womanly words, on which comment would be worse than superfluous. When the financial disaster came in 1826, one that affected or seemed likely to affect not her father and brothers and sister only, but herself and her husband, she faced it with admirable courage and composure. ‘Worse things,’ she says, ‘may happen to a family besides loss of fortune,’ and adds, ‘yet one cannot but feel sorrow to think that such

a man should have to labour so hard after having done so much.' Stoicism is good, but tenderness is better.

She died in May 1837 'after a long illness,' as her husband writes, 'which she bore with all possible meekness and fortitude: of all the race she most resembled her father in countenance, in temper, and in manners.'

She left two children, one of whom married Mr. Hope-Scott, and was the mother of the Hon. Mrs. Maxwell-Scott, who with her children are the only surviving representatives of the family which entered Abbotsford in 1812.

Two days before his wife's death Lockhart (*v.* Letter XLV.) wrote to Miss Millar, asking her to send him copies of 'Sophia's early letters, of which you speak so highly,' in addition to the 'very welcome transcripts of Sir Walter's letters to yourself' which he had already received. The twenty-eight letters now published must have been the originals of some of the copies sent to Lockhart, and were used, no doubt, by

him when he wrote the *Life of Scott*. Other letters probably, now lost, were written by Sophia to Miss Millar, for the correspondence, as given here, is broken by long intervals, and we may well believe that the ‘affectionate pupil,’ as she often signs herself, did not allow years to elapse without writing to a woman who had in a remarkable degree the power, which most good and simple people have, of winning the regard of persons superior to themselves in every respect except goodness.

Anne Scott is described by her father¹ as ‘an honest downright good Scots lass, in whom I could only wish to correct a spirit of satire.’ He blesses her for ‘practising Scots songs, which I take as a kind compliment to my own taste, as hers leads her chiefly to foreign music.’ The good girl saw that her father ‘wanted and must miss her sister’s peculiar talent in singing the airs of their native country, which always made the most pleasing impression on him.’

¹ Vol. iv., p. 374, chap. lxxv.

Lockhart in the *Life*,¹ writes of her as 'a lively rattling girl of sixteen,' and tells the story of the 'egg,' and the reckless audacity of 'Lady Anne' which made her father frown, and then laugh.

The twelve letters published here confirm the impression given by these utterances of her father and of her brother-in-law to be. Anne was a 'good' girl, and a merry one; full of the mischief which makes goodness irresistible. In Letter xv. she gives play to her 'spirit of satire,' indicating her opinion that 'ladies intellectual' were not usually extremely likeable. Nor does she spare a certain Miss Ramsay, whom perhaps she thought her brother inclined to admire, and judged accordingly, as sisters often do. In Letter xviii., where her grammar is not irreproachable, she laughs at her brother Charles' 'ambition to be a man'; gibes at the 'great Maria,' who, though an authoress, and given to talking more than listening, won the liking of her young critic; and concludes with some cynical

¹ Vol. iii., p. 230, chap. xliii.

remarks about long engagements, wondering why one of the 'old Miss Fraser Tytlers' and her *fiancé*—he especially—did not 'change their minds.' In Letters xx. and xxii. she seems to rejoice in the perversion of Agnes Hume, who is 'no longer holy, nor very good, but dresses in white satin and goes to balls.' But her malice is the malice only of a good-natured and happy girl.

Alas! her unclouded happiness was not of long duration. At the age of twenty-one (v. Letter xix.) she seems to have shown the first symptoms of the delicacy and weak health which did not subdue her gaiety. Her letters (Nos. xx. and xxii.) are full of the elasticity which she inherited from her father. Equally bright is the letter (No. xxiv.) in which she describes her tour in Ireland with her father in the autumn of 1825. They had a happy time in that 'distressful' country, where distress takes many pleasant forms, and which is full of humour and pathos, of memories of unsuccessful heroism and wild adventure;

material out of which Sir Walter, had fate permitted, would surely have made an Irish *Waverley* or *Rob Roy*. 1825 was the last year of nearly perfect happiness for the Scott family. In 1826 came two great calamities; the death of Lady Scott, the first gap made by death in the family circle; and desperate embarrassments of worse than poverty, of debt apparently insurmountable. Yet neither Anne, nor her father, nor her brothers, nor her sister failed to meet misfortune bravely and cheerfully. She writes more quietly, now sobered by her first experience of the 'changes and chances of this mortal life.' In 1828 she went with her father to Carlisle and Edinburgh. At Carlisle she writes to Lockhart, 'Papa took me with him to the Cathedral: this he had often done before, but he said he must stand once more on the spot where he married poor mamma.'¹ The incident recalls the last lines of the 'Sad fortunes of the Rev. Amos Barton,' which describe

¹ Vol. v., p. 209, chap. lxxvi.

another father and daughter standing, not in a cathedral, but by the dead wife's and mother's grave in a dreary churchyard. In Letter xxxi., after some hesitation, I have allowed a passage to remain in which Anne tells Miss Millar of her rejection of an offer of marriage. It is an old story, and to let it be told will hurt no one now. It was impossible that an attractive girl, handsome, sensible, and witty, a good daughter and a good sister, should have had no suitors, for she was well worth the winning, though not easily won. There is always something pathetic about a love story which comes to nothing; in her story, the 'pity of it' lies in this, that the heroine, after the twenty-third year of her short life, had little happiness, though she was comforted by the sense of usefulness, and of duty faithfully performed under the burdens of anxiety and poor health.

Her last journey with her father was to Malta and Naples at the end of 1831. Both of them were in quest of health and strength. They did not find what they

sought, and returned home, he to die at Abbotsford in September 1832. She was with him when he died. ‘She never,’ as her brother Charles writes in Letter xxxvii., ‘recovered from the shock of her father’s death.’ ‘The strange and awful scenes,’ to which she alludes in her last letter to Miss Millar, had broken her down, and after a winter and spring, spent in London under the loving care of her sister and brother-in-law, she followed her father. That she was ready to follow him we know from a touching passage in the *Life*,¹ ‘Her constitution had been miserably shattered in the course of her long and painful attendance first on her mother’s illness and then on her father’s; and perhaps reverse of fortune, and disappointments of various sorts connected with that, had also heavy effect. From the day of Sir Walter’s death, the strong stimulus of duty being lost, she too often looked and spoke like one

“Taking the measure of an unmade grave.”

¹ Vol. v., p. 451, chap. lxxxiv.

She died in my house in the Regent's Park on the 25th of June 1833, and her remains are placed in the New Cemetery in the Harrow Road. The adjoining grave holds those of her nephew, John Hugh Lockhart, who died on the 15th of December 1831, and also those of my wife Sophia.'

Sir Walter's remains lie, far away from Harrow Road,

φίλη ἐν πατρίδι γαίῃ,

in Dryburgh Abbey, 'by the side of his wife in the sepulchre of his ancestors.'

Only one letter from Lady Scott was kept by Miss Millar; a letter of a simple domestic character, worth inserting for the mention of the 'little people,' for its record of the menu of a dinner in Scotland ninety years ago, and most of all because it was written by Scott's wife. It has been said that she was not the wife for him. That was not Scott's opinion. She has been represented as a dull woman who did not understand her husband, nor his greatness. She can hardly have been a dull woman

who wrote the letters during her engagement which are given in the *Life*.¹ It is questionable also whether a husband and wife ought to entirely understand each other, and whether some room ought not to be left for mystery and illusion on both sides. Ought both husband and wife to be persons of genius? Surely the married life of two geniuses, even of two clever persons, is generally deficient in comfort and repose, and the old Scotsman was right who said that ‘ae sensible partner’ (he might have said ‘ae genius’) ‘is enough in the married state.’

This much is clear, that Scott loved his wife dearly, and felt her death profoundly. Entries in the *Diary*² from May 11 to October 11, 1826, show how he missed his ‘thirty years’ companion’; missed not literary sympathy, but ‘the affectionate care which smoothed his pillow, and offered condolence and assistance’; words which

¹ Vol. i., chap. viii.

² Vol. iv., p. 507, chap. lxx.; and vol. v., chap. lxxi. *passim*.

the writer would not quote but for indignation with thoughtless chatter. His daughters had the same love for one who did not put herself *en évidence* in the family history, but was none the less for that a good wife and mother.

Two great men have criticised Scott with much severity. Byron, with the petulance of youth, when, to use his own words, addressed to Scott after they became friends, ‘I was very young and very angry, and, fully bent on displaying my wrath and my wit, called him “Apollo’s venal son.”’ Carlyle, with the petulance which did not diminish as he grew older, and which made him unjust to friend and foe, and to himself, spoke of Scott as actuated by no higher motive than the desire to make money, become a laird, and found a family; yet with a happy inconsistency he recognises in him qualities not usually co-existent with commonplace ambitions. This is not the place for a discussion of these criticisms. They are mentioned only because, even were it con-

ceded that they are partly just, there can be discerned between the lines of these unpretending letters two 'notes' of magnanimity in the character of Scott, unselfishness, and heroic endurance, more than endurance, a 'noble cheerfulness' and indomitable energy under misfortunes which would have crushed any man not really great. Carlyle saw Scott's greatness in the extracts from the Diary given by Lockhart. The stern critic rightly calls the feelings and conduct evidenced by these extracts 'tragical and beautiful,' and speaks of Scott as one man of genius ought to speak of another; for Carlyle knew how to praise what is worthy of praise, when he saw it clearly, with vision undimmed by biliousness, depression, and fatigue.

No one can understand Scott or do justice to him who has not read his Diary. Being human, he was not faultless; but every one is truly judged by his best, not by his worst; for his best is the real nature of the man; a comforting doctrine, but true. Scott was most himself during the

last six years of his life. When financial ruin came, in the early months of 1826, he was in the fifty-fourth year of a laborious life; his health was breaking, if not broken; his eldest son and eldest daughter had left Abbotsford for homes of their own; his wife and beloved grandson, ‘Hugh Littlejohn,’ were ill, and soon to be taken from him. His ruin was complete, and seemed irretrievable, for he owed £130,000. Never did misfortunes come to any one in heavier battalions. He disdained to clear himself by bankruptcy, unless it were forced upon him;¹ for bankruptcy, he said, ‘I should, in a Court of Honour, deserve to lose my spurs. God grant me health and strength, and I will yet pay every man his due.’ Within two years he paid £40,000, made by writing *Woodstock*, *The Life of Napoleon*, *The Tales of a Grandfather*, and *The Fair Maid of Perth*, and by selling the copyright of his earlier works. He forgave Constable and Ballantyne, to whom—and alas! to his own carelessness—his

¹ Vol. iv., p. 419, chap. lxvii.

ruin was due. He spent time and money in helping other unfortunate men of letters, some of whom had neither claim on him, nor any merit of their own.¹ Though he suffered from sickness, loneliness, and sorrow, he kept his troubles to himself, and, on public occasions, and in the society of old friends, he showed himself brave and serene, with frequent flashes of humour and almost gaiety. His indomitable heroism was rewarded by widespread sympathy and respect; it was rewarded also by offers, invariably refused, of pecuniary assistance from persons of very various kinds; from ‘Poor Mr. Pole,’² the harper, who sent to offer me £500 or £600, probably his all,’ to some unknown friend³ who made him ‘the very odd anonymous offer of £30,000.’

On the day after his wife’s death,⁴ he writes, ‘I scarce know how I feel—some-

¹ Vol. v., pp. 168-76, chap. lxxv. These pages are worth reading for the comical story of G. H. Gordon and for other reasons.

² Vol. iv., p. 416, chap. lxvi.

³ Vol. iv., p. 435, chap. lxvii.

⁴ Vol. iv., p. 507, chap. lxx.

times as firm as the Bass Rock ; sometimes as weak as the water that breaks on it.’¹ This alternation of depression and fortitude can be traced all through the *Diary*, which no one, unless he is blinded by literary or political antagonism, can read without affection and veneration for the ‘real’ Scott.

The ‘Conclusion’ in Lockhart’s *Life of Scott* is one of the best chapters in that admirable book. There are explained things which puzzle Scott’s admirers, his ‘dream not of personal fame,’ but of long distant generations rejoicing in the name of ‘Scott of Abbotsford’; his ‘fatal connection with merchandise’; his concealment of that connection, and carelessness in the conduct of it; his almost extravagant loyalty to George III. and George IV., apparently incompatible with his fervent Jacobitism.

¹ ‘His *Diary* shows that, in spite of the dignified equanimity which characterised all his conversation with mankind, he had his full share of the delicate sensibilities, the mysterious ups and downs, the wayward melancholy, the fantastic sunbeams of the poetical temperament.’ (Lockhart, vol. v., p. 152, chap. lxxiv.)

It is dangerous to speculate on the duration of literary fame, but it seems probable that the reaction, now beginning, from 'psychological analysis' and general 'subjectivity,' will, in the course of this new century, raise Scott's poetry and novels to even a higher place in literature than was awarded to them seventy years ago. Should the publication of these letters help in the humblest way towards such a consummation, the writer will have had a far more than adequate reward for his poor performance of a pleasant duty.

SCOTT LETTERS

I

SIR WALTER SCOTT TO HIS DAUGHTER
SOPHIA.¹

1810(?).

BENEATH every king's reign Papa expects Sophia to write down neatly and in good

¹ This undated letter, in Sir Walter's clearest and most careful handwriting, was written to a child of probably ten or eleven years of age, and comes first in interest as well as in date of the letters here published. In it is implied, if not stated, the theory of history which found expression in the *Tales of a Grandfather*, written for his daughter's son sixteen or seventeen years later. Sir Walter would have been impatient with any one who told him that great men are the products of their age, and who talked to him about laws of history, and causation, and prediction. It is painful to think what he would have said about Comte and Buckle and their adherents. In his view great men made their age, and history was to him not a science, but a romance. He was a hero-worshipper, and would have agreed with Carlyle in believing that 'the history of what man has accomplished in this world is the history of the great men who have worked here; they were the leaders of men these great ones.' The best comment on this letter is the passage quoted in the Introduction, where Lockhart

spelling the following particulars : Whether his reign was peaceful or warlike.

If warlike, with whom he was at war ; and particularly whether with his own subjects or foreign nations. Also whether he was victorious in battle (generally), or defeated.

Whether any great alterations of government took place in his reign, and what they were.

Whether he was a good man or a bad.

Whether the condition of his subjects was amended or became worse under his reign.

II

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—Mr. Scott finds that he has so many things to settle here, and besides so¹ unable to resist the

describes Scott's lectures on history delivered to his own children. Would that he were lecturing or writing now for older children ! Such a wish implies no discontent with the instructive lectures on history now delivered by the professors in the University of Weissnichtwo.

¹ The editor has not corrected the mistakes in grammar or spelling which occur in some of these letters ; deficiencies in both were more common a hundred years ago than now, and were then, as now, compatible with intellectual and

temptation of remaining here a little longer, that he has put off our return to Town for Monday next, when we hope to have the pleasure of seeing you, and to find you all well. Will you have the goodness to tell the Cook that we are to have a large party to dine with us on Wednesday next ; therefore wishes she would get on Saturday, feet for jelly, and meat for soup, and either a Saddle or a handsome piece of Beef for the bottom dish, also pallets, sweet bread, etc. Will you also tell her I will bring with me a Hen, Chickens, and, if I can, Ducks ; therefore not to bespeak any poultry or fish until I come. The weather here is fine, but very cold, so much so that ice may be seen early in the morning, and which has done much damage among the plants. Sophia joins me in kindest and best wishes to you ;

moral qualities of the highest kind. It must be remembered that Lady Scott was French and bilingual, and that it is hard to write correctly in two languages, and not easy to do so in one. Professor Hodgson has shown in his *Errors in the Use of English* that the best English writers write bad English. We must therefore pardon Lady Scott and her daughters, and her husband also, for being *supra grammaticam*.

love to all the little people,¹ and a thousand kisses, and believe me yours very sincerely,

M. CHARLOTTE SCOTT.

Remember us to the Russells and Rutherford. I hope you will be able to read this scrawl I am writing in such a hurry.

Wednesday, Two o'clock.

Will you tell John that I hope *he will amuse* himself with cleaning his plate stands, etc.

ABBOTSFORD (?), *June 9, 1814.*

III

ABBOTSFORD, *August 3, 1817.*

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—It gave us great pleasure to hear that you were upon a nearer view pleased with your situation, and that you found Miss Scrymegour though a little spoilt a very good girl. I went with Papa and Mamma upon the 12th

¹ The little people are of course Walter, Anne, and Charles, aged respectively about thirteen, eleven, and eight.

to Drumlanrig, Captain Adam Ferguson¹ went with us also. We went first to Loch Lomond to visit Mr. Macdonald Buchanan, and when we were there Papa and the rest of the gentlemen went up to the head of the Loch to see Rob Roy's cave; none of the ladies to my great mortification were allowed to be of the party, as they did not know but they might have had to sleep all night in an ale-house which they were to land at, in case they could not make out Ross:² as it was they landed at Ross about eleven o'clock, highly pleased with their expedition. We went from Ross to Drumlanrig round by Greenock and Largs, at which last place we walked over the

¹ Captain Adam Ferguson, the son of Dr. Adam Ferguson (Lockhart, vol. iv., p. 41, chap. lvi.), was one of the earliest and most valued of Scott's friends. 'He combined the lightest and most airy temper with the best and kindest disposition.' They had 'high jinks' together in their youth; a ludicrous story is told of the origin of Ferguson's cognomen 'Linton.' He became Scott's neighbour in 1818, and lived at Huntly Burn after his retirement from the army, and became keeper of the Regalia 'to the great joy of all Edinburgh.' (Vol. i., p. 43, chap. i.; p. 162, chap. i.; vol. iii., p. 158, chap. xl.)

² See in Lockhart's *Life* (vol. iii., p. 125, chap. xxxix.) Scott's lines on this expedition.

ground where the battle against the Danes was fought; the remains of immense cairns of stones mark the battle. I daresay you will be sorry to hear that poor Mrs. Laidlaw¹ is dead; she died about two months ago. Perhaps you may have heard that Lady Hood is married. She married a very pleasant clever man, Mr. Stewart of Glasserton, who has a very good fortune; so she has dropped the ladyship, and is now plain Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie: she sent us gloves, cake, and favours. The new house is coming on very fast; they are building the last story, and it looks beautiful. We spend most of our time in airing ourselves upon the top, and I think it will be wonderful if it is finished without any of us breaking our necks. Lord Somerville is going to give us a boat for our Loch:² it is to be launched to-morrow with due

¹ Mother of William Laidlaw, Scott's steward or factor, and valued friend. (Vol. iii., p. 136, chap. xxxviii., and Introduction.)

² The loch was Cauldshields Loch, near the scene of Thomas the Rhymer's interviews with the Queen of Elfland. The boat was called 'Search No. I,' in allusion to the *Antiquary*, chap. xxiii. (Mrs. Maxwell-Scott.)

ceremony, the noble donor and the Scotts of Mertoun to be present. Mamma and Papa with all of us join me in best wishes to you, and believe me to remain your affectionate pupil,

CHARLOTTE SOPHIA SCOTT.

You must just put enough of boiling water in the milk to make it sufficiently warm.

Write soon.

IV

EDINBURGH, *November 25, 1817.*

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—Ann and I return you many thanks for your very pretty purses. I can assure you they came in very good time, for we had just come to town, and according to custom had lost every thing in the shape of a purse, and were reduced to the disgraceful alternative of carrying our shillings (I won't say pence) in our glove, to our infinite loss. Papa has been very well till within a fortnight ago,

when he had a severe fit of the cramp, but he is now quite recovered, and I hope will pass the winter without any more returns of that severe complaint,¹ for you have no idea of the dreadful pain of the attacks, and the more so as they always come on in the night. Abbotsford is looking beautiful. The new house was just going to be roofed in when I left it, so that I think that by next summer we will be able to inhabit it. Papa has made a great addition to his property lately, for he has bought Mr. Usher's place of Toftfield, which makes our ground extend up to the foot of the Eildon hills, and even up part of them, and, besides that, there is an excellent rich house upon it (that Mr. Usher had just built, but had never gone into, as it is hardly finished), that Capt. Ferguson and his sisters are coming to live in next year, so we will have a merry summer of it with him so near a neighbour. We had the famous Mr. Wilkie, the painter, for a fortnight at Abbotsford, when Capt.

¹ See Scott's letter, vol. iii., pp. 138-9, chap. xxxix.

Ferguson and his sister were with us, and he made a capital picture of the whole family, which he intends to finish in London for the exhibition, and afterwards to engrave, so we will have a print of it. We are all drawn in character. Ann and I as two milkmaids with pails upon our heads, Papa sitting, and Capt. Ferguson standing, looking for all the world like an old poacher who understands his trade. Papa has got us a most delightful new harp from London the other day. It and the stand for the books cost £119, so you may think that it is a very handsome thing. We had Lady Byron¹ for a day at Abbotsford. She is very pretty and very melancholy. We went to the Melrose and Selkirk balls, besides a delightful dance at the Duke of Buccleuch's, so for my part I find the

¹ See Scott's letter to Miss Joanna Baillie (vol. iii., p. 138, chap. xxxix.), a letter of importance as bearing on the Byron controversy. Laidlaw gives the following description of Lady Byron: 'Her ladyship is a beautiful little woman, with fair hair, a fine complexion, and rather large blue eyes; face not round. She looked steadily grave, and seldom smiled. I thought her mouth indicated great firmness, or rather obstinacy.' (*Abbotsford Notanda*, p. 150.)

country far more gay than the town. I believe I will go a little about this winter. I only hope I may get half as many beaux as I have had in the country.

I hope you will write soon, for you know my penchant for receiving a letter. We begin all our studies this week. Mamma, Papa, Walter, Ann, and Charles, join me in best love to you, and believe me to remain, my dear Miss Millar, your affectionate pupil,

CHARLOTTE SOPHIA SCOTT.

Excuse writing for my sake.

Grandmamma, the Humes,¹ the Russels, and Miss Rutherford are quite well.

¹ For Scott's own account of his relationships *see* vol. i., pp. 8-11, chap. i., and chap. ii., pp. 49-64, for Lockhart's comment. He came of 'decent people,' being by his mother's side a Swinton, and through his father's side descended from Scott of Harden, and thus connected with the house of Buccleuch. Scott was proud of his gentle birth, and it deeply affected his character and his views of many things: 'To be a chief of the soil and its people, and contemplate his children as succeeding him in the same position, was with him to realise one of the poetical dreams which haunted his mind.' It was an ambition, not of a vulgar parvenu, but one 'grafted on that ardent feeling for blood and kindred which was the great redeeming element in the social life of the Middle

V

October 18, 1818.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I received your kind letter, and I can assure you that it gave us all very great pleasure to hear of your getting a good situation. Mamma and Papa desire me to say that it would give them *very great pleasure* if you could spare time to come and see all our improvements here; if you would write to me the day you can come, we would be down to meet you at the toll. I can assure you (though I say it that should not say it) Abbotsford is well worth looking at now. Do try and come here as *soon as you can*, as we cannot expect the weather to remain long as delightful as it is at present: besides, if you come at the beginning of next week you will have the supreme

Ages. There was much kindness surely in such ambition; in spite of the apparent contradiction in terms, was there not really much humility about it?' Scott worshipped birth and genius, not rank nor money. See a striking passage in the *Life*, vol. iv., pp. 329-31, chap. lxiv.

felicity of seeing your elegant pupil¹ Walter in his yeomanry dress, which, I can assure you, he is not a little vain of. Papa asked him lately what his brilliant genius inclined him to, and he declared that he would be nothing but a soldier; so a soldier he is to be. If you see Miss Hume before you come here, be sure and give my very best love to her. I daresay you will have been sorry to hear that Miss Russel has lost her brother Alexander. He died of a fever in India; she has been very ill in consequence. Perhaps you will be so good as to enquire how she does, and bring us word. Dear Miss Millar, hoping to see you here very soon, I reserve all my news till we meet, and believe me to remain your very affectionate friend,

CHARLOTTE SOPHIA SCOTT.

¹ The 'elegant pupil' was then a handsome boy of seventeen. See an account of him—of 'his muscular strength, his sweet and even temper, and talents, which in the son of any father but his would have been considered brilliant'—in Lockhart, vol. v., p. 464, addenda to the last chapter. He died childless in 1847, and with him the baronetcy expired. Sophia idolised him, and ridiculed her idol, as

You will find your old friend Mr. Terry¹ here. We dance to the pipes² almost every night in the new dining-room. Excuse this horrid writing, but the man is waiting to take this up to Selkirk, that you may get it a day sooner.

VI

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I write this to let you know that we have just heard of the death of Mamma's brother, Mr. Carpenter: he died upon the 4th of March, after an illness of about a week. You will be glad to hear that he has left the *whole*

worshippers sometimes do. Compare Letter ix. for another exhibition of the ways of sisters.

¹ Daniel Terry, the 'ingenious comedian.' A charming sketch of him is given by Lockhart (vol. ii., pp. 102-3, chap. xix.). He was one of the many hapless men of letters to whom Scott gave assistance when he was himself in need and necessity. To him was due the adaptation to the stage of some of the Waverley novels, what Scott used to call their 'Terrification.'

² The pipes to which they danced were played by a 'tall and stalwart bagpiper, in complete Highland costume, pacing to and fro on the green before the house.' He was named 'John of Skye,' and was professionally a hedger and ditcher, who 'only figured with the pipe and philabeg on high occasions.' (Lockhart, vol. iii., pp. 219-21, chap. xlii.)

of his fortune to be equally divided between us four; that is to say, we are to get full possession of it after Mrs. Carpenter's death, as she is to have the interest of it all during her life. He has not even left a farthing to Mamma, or any other person. We do not know exactly how much the fortune is, but it is very considerable: there is thirty thousand safe in this country, and I believe that there is as much, or more, in India.¹ Papa is talking of going abroad in September, and of taking Mamma and us four as far as Geneva, there to leave us to join some party, and proceed homewards by Paris, while himself and Walter will proceed to Italy, and from thence over to Greece; but this is only a talk, though I daresay it will take place, as Papa is very anxious that Walter should get rid of his shyness by going abroad before he enters the Guards, as it is now settled he is to go into that regiment, on account of their

¹ This estimate of the fortune was much exaggerated. See Lockhart, vol. iii., pp. 240-1.

not going to the East or West Indies. Our uncle dying has made quite a noise in the town: all the old women in the town torment Papa with questions about poor Mr. Carpenter's will. Papa wishes that he could write the whole story over the door. I hope that you will write to me very soon, and let me know how you like your new situation.

The Duke¹ is gone abroad for his health, and has taken Adam Ferguson with him. We hope that, if you should come to town, that you will take up your quarters here.

I remain, dear Miss Millar, with best love from all here, yours very affectionately,

CHARLOTTE SOPHIA SCOTT.

39 CASTLE STREET,²

Friday, December 12, 1818.

¹ The Duke of Buccleuch.

² 39 North Castle Street was the house in which Scott lived from 1798 down to 1826. He used it as his town house, spending his vacations, and occasional holidays, at Lasswade, or Ashestiel, or Abbotsford. 'The cabin was convenient,' he writes in his Diary, March 15, 1826, 'and habit had made it agreeable to me. This morning I leave it for the last time. Farewell, poor 39—"Ha til mi tulid"' (I return no more). (Lockhart, vol. iv., p. 476, chap. lxviii.)

VII

ABBOTSFORD, 11th May 1819.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I would have written to you long ago, but Papa's dreadful state of health¹ for these last two months has prevented me from thinking of anything but himself; and at one time, for nearly three weeks, there did not pass one night in which we were not up, either the whole night, or most part of it; and constantly wanted in his room the whole day, so that what with nursing him and writing for him I had not one moment to myself. He is now, thank God, getting quite well, and, I trust, past all danger of

¹ During the whole of this year, especially in March and April, Scott suffered terribly from 'a recurrence of the maladies (cramp in the stomach, and jaundice) which had so much alarmed his friends in the early part of the year 1817, and which had continued ever since to torment him at intervals.' (Lockhart, chap. xlv. *passim*.) He was now in his forty-ninth year, and twenty years of excessive literary labour had brought their penalty. His health, as he writes to Southey, was now 'very totterish,' but his energy and industry were undiminished. It was in this year that he first employed an amanuensis. The account given by Lockhart (vol. iii., p. 280, chap. xlv.) of William Laidlaw's performances in that capacity is well worth reading.

a relapse. For three weeks, to add to the jaundice, he had the most dreadful spasms in his stomach, every twenty-four hours, which lasted, notwithstanding immense quantities of opiates, and sometimes bleeding, eight, nine, and ten hours at a time; and one attack remained unmoved for thirty-six hours, during all which time he was not five minutes free from the most dreadful agony. Though we have been in the country since Papa was taken ill, and consequently had many inconveniences to struggle with, yet, upon the whole, it was better that we were here, as besides Dr. Clarkson coming every day, we had his son, a very clever young man, staying in the house; and what made us very easy was that when Dr. Ross came out, he found that everything had been done that was possible. Doctor Baillie also declared that he could advise nothing more than what had been already done. You would be much shocked at the death of poor Joseph Hume;¹ he died in

¹ See Lockhart, vol. iii., p. 274, chap. xlv. Joseph Hume

five minutes; he had had a sore throat, but not the very least danger apprehended, so much so that they were to have company to dinner. He was in bed, and talking to his sister, when he fell back choking, and in two minutes all was over. The doctors seem to think that it was a sudden spasm in the throat. What a dreadful loss to his family; and to make it still worse, if possible, he was going to be married to one of Sir John Hay's daughters almost immediately. Papa's dear and best friend, the Duke of Buccleuch,¹ has taken leave of this life

was the only son of Mr. David Hume, Professor of Scots Law in the University of Edinburgh, whose lectures Scott had attended with much profit and pleasure, when reading for the bar. The Professor became Baron of the Exchequer. He was a cultivated man, and seems to have been among the first who penetrated the disguise of the author of *Waverley*, arguing that 'he must be of a Jacobite family and predilections, a yeoman-cavalryman, and a Scottish lawyer.' The Baron was a nephew of the greater David Hume, whom Scott knew only by his rhymes written on a pane of glass in an inn at Carlisle, 'the only rhymes the philosopher was ever known to be guilty of.' (Lockhart, vol. iii., p. 31, chap. xxxv.)

¹ See Scott's letter in Lockhart, vol. iii., pp. 288-90, chap. xlv.—the letter of one mourning the loss not of a 'noble patron,' but of his friend and the chief of his clan.

upon the 20th of last month, at Lisbon, where he had gone for his health, accompanied by Captain Adam Ferguson: although Papa has been expecting that sad event for some time, still it has been a dreadful shock to him. The country is looking quite beautiful, and we regret very much being under the necessity of returning to town the day after to-morrow. I hope that you find your present situation comfortable, and that your young charge is improving as rapidly as you can wish. You will be glad to hear that Walter is likely to experience no inconvenience or delay in getting into the army, although it is such a difficult matter at present; but the Duke of York says that he will get over everything for Mr. Scott. Charles is quite well, and doing very well at the High School, which he is attending at present. At some future time Papa talks of putting him to some good school at Geneva. We were pretty gay before we left town, and had so many invitations that, if we had accepted a quarter of them, we

might have been at two or three places a night, but we kept on the side of moderation. Anne is grown up a very handsome girl,¹ and is much admired: she is improved very much upon the harp; indeed, Mr. Pole says that, if she would practise, she would be one of the best players in town, for the time she has been at it. I hope your friends the Toveys are well: it must be a great pleasure to you their being so near.

I hope that you will write to me very soon, and believe me to remain, with best love to you, in which I am joined by all the family, yours ever most affectionately,

CHARLOTTE SOPHIA SCOT.

VIII

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR, — You will rejoice to hear that Papa is quite well now, and the improvement has been so gradual that there is no chance (at least to all

¹ Anne was now sixteen, a 'lively, rattling girl' (Lockhart, vol. iii., p. 230, chap. xlii.), and probably averse to steady practice on the harp, or in letter-writing (*see* Letter VIII.).

appearance) of a relapse—he has got quite rid of his yellow complexion, and feels no other inconvenience than a temporary weakness. Both Papa and Mamma set out to-day at twelve o'clock for Abbotsford, and Papa thinks that, if he feels quite stout, he will not return here, but send Mamma back in about a fortnight, or three weeks, to arrange this house, and transport us all out to Abbotsford to remain the summer. The fish arrived quite safe, and were most excellent, and you would have heard of their arrival long ago, if you had trusted me to write to you; but after having witnessed the destruction of three different epistles of Anne's by the hand of the fair authoress, I in despair take the pen, as you are not very likely to hear often from the young lady. I will write to you the very moment I hear from Abbotsford, and believe me to remain, in a dreadful hurry, your very sincere friend,

C. SOPHIA SCOTT.

39 CASTLE STREET, *Monday, June 14, 1819.*

IX

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I have the pleasure to be able to tell you that Papa is getting quite well and strong once more. He had a very bad attack after I wrote to you, occasioned, as we think, by the fatigue of coming to the country long before he was strong enough to bear the journey, but now he is in the fair way of complete convalescence, to which the good air of Abbotsford and gentle exercise does not a little contribute. You will be glad to hear that Walter's commission is come down, and that his name was in yesterday's gazette as cornet in the 18th Light Dragoons, now Hussars: he is too happy, and the only thing that is to be feared is his dying of pride and conceit before he joins, as it is among the most dashing regiments in the service. He has as yet got no orders, but of course he must either join or go to a military college; the 18th is in Ireland. You may be sure we will

miss him very much. Anne has had a very bad cough for some time, but her taking warm milk in the morning since she came to the country, and change of air has cured it almost completely. She will write very soon. Abbotsford is looking quite beautiful just now. Mamma is gone to town for a few days to superintend the packing of the carts, and to bring with her for the summer Walter, and the rest of the servants: we expect her upon Monday. How do you like the *New Tales of my Landlord*? Are they not excellent? I would advise you to read a new book which will be out soon called *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk*,¹ being a description of the society of Glasgow and Edinburgh. It is one of the most clever, and at the same time rather

¹ *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk* was written by Lockhart, aided probably by one or more of the clever young advocates who composed the Chaldee MS. Scott gives his opinion of his future son-in-law's first book in a letter written in acknowledgment of its receipt. (Lockhart, vol. iii., pp. 303-4, chap. xlv.) Sophia probably knew who its author was, and judged it favourably; even more favourably than the *New Tales of my Landlord*.

severe books that has been written for ages ; this is Papa's opinion. I hope that you will excuse this sad scrawl, and that the good news that it contains of Papa's health will be its apology ; and with most sincere good wishes from all here to yourself, believe me to remain ever yours most affectionately,

CHARLOTTE SOPHIA SCOTT.

ABBOTSFORD, *5th July* 1819.

X

ABBOTSFORD, *September 24*, 1819.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I had almost made a vow that I would not write again till I heard from you, but you have been so long about it, that I can wait no longer. Besides I have as great an event to relate as Lady Margaret's dejeuner at Tiltetudelum ('Tillietudlem): our poor house has been honoured by a visit of his Royal Highness Prince Leopold,¹ and I shall now give you the particulars in full.

¹ The Prince was Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, after-

Last Friday papa received a note from the Magistrates of Selkirk saying that the Prince was to pass through their town at twelve o'clock, on his way to Carlisle, where he was to sleep, and requesting him, as Sheriff, to come up and receive him. Accordingly all of us, with the addition of Mr. and Mrs. Skene,¹ and Eliza

wards King of the Belgians. (Lockhart, vol. iii., pp. 323-5, chap. xlv.)

¹ The Skenes were the Skenes of Rubislaw. James Skene became Scott's friend in 1796. They were drawn together at first by their interest in German literature, and by other common tastes, for both were antiquaries of different kinds but equal enthusiasm, into an intimacy, of which writes Skene, 'I shall ever think with so much pride of a friendship so pure and cordial as to have been able to withstand all the vicissitudes of nearly forty years, without ever having sustained even a casual chill from unkind thought or word.' (Lockhart, vol. i., p. 224, chap. viii.) The references to him in the *Life* are numerous, and show that Skene was Scott's dearest friend. In the Diary (Jan. 23, 1826) we can read words, perhaps not altogether just to other friends who also stood by Scott in his disasters, but just at least to 'the good Samaritan James Skene, the only one among my numerous friends who can properly be termed *amicus curarum mearum*, others being too busy or too gay, and several being estranged by habit.' Mrs. Skene, 'a most excellent person and tenderly fond of Sophia,' complied with his desire that 'she should carry him to renew an acquaintance which seems to have been interrupted from the period of his youthful romance.' She told Lockhart that 'a very painful scene ensued' (vol. v.,

Russell,¹ set off in a body to receive his Royal Highness. We met him a mile beyond Selkirk, and when Papa said that Melrose was well worth his Royal Highness seeing, he replied, that nothing he regretted so much as the arrangements for horses, etc., making it impossible for him to go so far out of his route, but it would be impossible for him to leave Scotland without seeing Mr. Scott in his own house; this, you observe, being eight miles out of the way, made it really a compliment. Figure the dismay of the female part of our family upon hearing this Royal resolve, not having the least idea of his coming out of his way to see us. We had left no orders at home—time we had not an instant, as his Royal Highness arrived at Abbotsford the moment we did, but, wonderful to

p. 160, chap. lxxiv.), and she thought it 'highly probable that it was on returning from this call that he committed to writing the verses "To Time," by his early favourite, which you have printed in your first volume' (vol. i., p. 211, chap. vii).

¹ Eliza and Jane Russell were the grand-daughters of Col. Russell of Ashestiel, who married Jane Rutherford, a sister of Scott's mother.

relate, for it really seemed like enchantment, in about three-quarters of an hour, we were able to place him, as the newspapers express these things, to an elegant collation. He was, or seemed to be, truly pleased with everything, and said, on departing, how happy he should be if Papa would receive him, upon his return to Scotland, for a longer visit, but, as he was situated with regard to time, he would not take any of the few moments he could call his own from the pleasure of Mr. Walter Scott's company, though it was to see Melrose. He staid two hours with us, and, even if he had not been a prince, or had such an interesting and melancholy history, he must have gained every person's love by his unaffected and pleasant manners—he is as like as possible his print. I forget if I told you that Walter has joined his regiment, the 18th Hussars, at Cork: he left us in July. We hear very often from him, and he writes (what I should not have expected, as he has had no practice) *most capital letters*. He has apart-

ments at the Barracks, and writes a most amusing account of his house keeping. It is said that the regiment's next quarters will be Dublin, so I do not think we will see Walter for a couple of years: you may be sure we miss him very very much. Charles is still at home, and, I believe, is to be at the High School in winter; afterwards Papa thinks of sending him to some school abroad. Papa is in perfect health; indeed I never saw him better, even in his days of health: he has given Anne and me the most beautiful new poney between us; it is a bright bay with a long black tail that reaches the ground; we call her Queen Mab. You will be sorry to hear that poor old Lady Wallace¹ died the other day, to the distress of the whole family. Poor Mrs. William Erskine² died

¹ Lady Wallace was a pony. To the Scotts all their 'lower animals,' their dogs and horses at least, were on the level of human beings, and treated as members of the family. The last direction which Scott, when leaving Abbotsford for Italy, gave Laidlaw, was to take care of the dogs, and keep them separate should there be occasion for quarrel.

² Mrs. William Erskine was the 'excellent wife' of William

a fortnight ago in Cumberland, where they had taken her for her health, which has been declining for long : what a dreadful loss she will be to her family. So Catherine Hume¹ is really married to Doctor — ? I think it is the very best thing she could do, for he is a very good and a very sensible young man, and most likely to put any nonsense out of her head. We were very anxious to be in town for the musical festival, but I do not think we will be able to make it out, but we will be in Edinburgh for certain upon the 12th of November. Miss Rutherford and Eliza Russell have been staying nearly six weeks with us ; they left us yesterday, and I am happy to say that the former seemed a good deal better for her visit. I believe

Erskine, afterwards Lord Kinneddar : she died at Lowood on Windermere. (Lockhart, vol. iii., pp. 321, 329, chap. xlv.) Her husband was an intimate friend of Scott's, and his 'literary referee' ; a trusted adviser, whose 'refined taste and gentle manners rendered his critical alliance highly valuable.' (Lockhart, vol. i., p. 378, chap. xiii.)

¹ This young lady, who was to be improved by marriage, was the sister of Agnes Hume (*see* Letters xx. and xxii.) and of Joseph Hume (*see* Letter vii.).

that there is some little change for the better upon Jane Russell. All here join me in best wishes and best love to you, and believe me to remain yours truly affectionately,

CHARLOTTE SOPHIA SCOTT.

XI

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—You will be much shocked to hear of the severe family losses we have met with in this last fortnight—we have lost in that short space of time our uncle and aunt (the Doctor and Miss Rutherford)¹ and poor Grandmamma.²

Grandmamma was seized about a fort-

¹ Doctor Rutherford and Miss Christian Rutherford were the brother and sister of Scott's mother, and therefore grand-uncle and grand-aunt of Sophia. She uses the terms 'uncle' and 'aunt' with no real inaccuracy, or with the inaccuracy only of affection, identifying her father and herself. See Scott's letters to his brother, and to Lady Louisa Stewart, for an account of the losses in the year (1819) of dear friends and relations, losses which had made him 'bankrupt in Society.' (Lockhart, vol. iii., pp. 347-53, chap. xlv.)

² Scott's mother, Anne Rutherford, was the eldest daughter of Dr. John Rutherford, Professor of Medicine in

night ago with palsy, and lingered for about ten days, not suffering, but from

the University of Edinburgh, and grand-daughter of Sir John Swinton of Swinton whose family 'for antiquity and honourable alliances may rank with any in Britain.' She transmitted to her favourite son her pride in long descent, 'a light and happy temper of mind, and a strong turn to study poetry and works of imagination. She was sincerely devout, but her religion was, as became her sex, of a cast less austere than his father's.' It was tempered by 'a turn for literature quite uncommon among the ladies of the time.' Under her encouragement Scott, at the age of seven, read aloud Shakespeare's plays and the *Arabian Nights* in the family circle; and even acted plays occasionally in the dining-room after the lessons of the day were over, taking among other parts that of the Duke of Gloucester in *Richard III.*, on the ground 'that the limp would do well enough to represent the hump.' She was a great genealogist like all Scottish ladies of gentle birth, and like them, or most of them, a Jacobite. She was fond of telling the story of Murray of Broughton's teacup, which her husband 'tossed out upon the pavement.' Her husband, though of sterner mould, resembled her in many ways. His face wore 'an expression of sweetness of temper which was not fallacious; his manners were rather formal, but full of genuine kindness, especially when exercising the duties of hospitality.' Like his son, in matters of business, he conducted himself with the simplicity of Uncle Toby. He too, his son suspects, 'when immured in his solitary room, and supposed to be immersed in professional researches,' was engaged, not with Tasso and Ariosto, but with authors of works partly of fiction of another kind, Spottiswoode and Knox. 'In political principles he was a steady friend to freedom, with a bias, however, to the monarchical part of our constitution,' no doubt a Jacobite whose 'feelings were contrary to his opinions,' as were his son's about Mary

the first deprived of speech and the use of one side, so that we thought it a great mercy when she was released, as it was too evident she never could get round. The day after she was taken ill her brother the doctor was seeing her, to all appearance in perfect health, but upon the following morning, as he was waiting for the carriage, he dropped down quite dead with gout in the stomach. Of course his death was not told to Miss Rutherford, or Grandmamma, and there was no occasion for it, as she died the morning after. I think that there is hardly another instance of two sisters and a brother dying within a few days of each other, and none of them knowing of the others' death. Poor Miss Russell¹ has been very ill, but we trust that, now all is over, she will in time recover. We heard from Walter the other

Queen of Scots. It is an interesting and frequently debated question, whether great men 'take after' their fathers or their mothers; Scott seems to have taken after both to some degree, but most after his mother. (Lockhart, vol. i., chaps. i. and ii.)

¹ See note 1, p. 62.

day. He was quite well and very busy. Of course all this will prevent Papa's going to London till March,¹ as he could not go to Court in such deep mourning as he must wear for his mother. Papa is going along with Scott of Gala² to raise a corps of sharp shooters at Abbotsford, and he finds that, instead of only raising a couple of hundred men, he could as easily raise twice as many—in short he has at present a military fever, I should rather say phrensy, as he can talk of nothing else but his corps.³

¹ Scott went to London in March 1820, 'for the purpose of receiving his baronetcy, which he had been prevented from doing in the spring of the preceding year by his own illness, and again at Christmas by accumulated family afflictions.' (Lockhart, vol. iii., p. 371, chap. xlviii.)

² John Scott of Gala, his kinsman and neighbour, who went with him to see the field of Waterloo in 1815. (Lockhart, vol. iii., p. 4, chap. xxxv.) Major Scott met Scott in London in 1831, when he was on his way to Naples, and has recorded some pathetic reminiscences of the change in his appearance, and of mental and physical decay.

³ The political condition of the West of Scotland, then alarming enough, though the danger was exaggerated by ridiculous reports, excited in Scott the 'phrensy' mentioned here. He was 'a fighting man' and a strong anti-revolutionist; as ready to meet the 'Radicals,' as he had been ready to meet the French fifteen or twenty years before, when 'Walter Scott was Paymaster, Quartermaster,

I will write very soon, but am very busy at this moment, and believe me to remain most affectionately yours,

C. SOPHIA SCOTT.

39 CASTLE STREET,
Wednesday, December 29, 1819.

Poor Grandmamma is buried to-day.

and Secretary of the Midlothian Yeomanry Cavalry Corps. He writes to his son Walter, in December 1819, a humorous account of 'Master Charles, the only specimen of youthful manhood at home, sleeping with an old broadsword hanging up at his bed head, which, to be the more ready for service, hath no sheath.' It was ready for service against the band of Western Radicals who had 'a plan to seize on a thousand stand of arms, as well as a depôt of ammunition in Edinburgh Castle,' and against the fifty thousand pitmen and colliers of Northumberland, who were reported to be ready to join the Glasgow rebels. It is easy for us, after the event, to laugh at these alarms; but those who remembered the French Revolution, distant from them only a quarter of a century, may be excused for feeling some anxiety. Distress and discontent prevailed not in Glasgow only, but in London, Birmingham, and Manchester. It was not known, at least to the Tories of those days, that there were other methods of meeting nascent revolution than 'a whiff of grape shot.' A passage may here be quoted which throws light on the characters of Lady Scott and her two daughters. 'Anne is so much afraid of the disaffected that last night, returning with Sophia from Portobello, where they had been dancing with the Scotts of Harden, she saw a Radical in every man that the carriage passed. Sophia is of course wise and philosophical, and Mamma has not yet been able

XII

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I received your kind letter, and you see am not very long in answering it, although I have little or nothing to write about, having been living very very quiet. I am quite ashamed to say, in answer to your enquiries concerning my Italian studies, that at present they are quite at a stop, and, although with the new year I made the customary good resolutions, still the new leaf remains to turn; whenever that great event takes place I will let you know; in the mean time you must let me know how you come on, and if you find it easy. We heard from Walter the other day; he was well, and hoped to meet Papa in London upon the 12th of March, and to come down here along with him to pay us a visit: you may be sure how happy we are at the thoughts of seeing him again among us. There has been new views

to conceive why we do not catch and hang the whole of them untried and unconvicted. (Lockhart, vol. iii., p. 341, chap. xlv.)

with regard to Charles, which I think will give you pain, as it has done me. Papa has got the offer of a writership in India for him,¹ which is the sure way of making money, as the moment they touch Indian Shore they get 5 hundred a year, and, if they are at all industrious, may make any money. Such an offer as this Papa does not think his duty to refuse, more especially as Charles, though extremely clever, is also extremely idle, and it would be quite out of the question to expect he would turn out a good lawyer in this town, with so many opportunities of seeing and being in company, and so little taste for studying to the purpose. However, if he does go, it will not be for three years, and many things may happen before that passes over; besides, with the recommendations he can get, if he is in the least industrious, he may come home in

¹ 'Through the kindness of Mr. Croker, Scott received from the late Earl Bathurst, then Colonial Secretary of State, the offer of an appointment in the Civil Service of the East India Company for his second son. (Lockhart, vol. iii., p. 361, chap. xlvii.)

two years with a very handsome fortune, whereas at the bar many a lawyer is only beginning after that space of time to be making 2 hundred a year, and that with much toil. I must say that it needs many many good reasons to make one consent to parting with a brother for so long a time. You will be very very sorry to hear that poor Eliza Russell is no more; she died yesterday morning of a sort of nervous low fever, brought on at first from excessive fatigue in attending her aunt. I do not think it possible that Anne and Jane will survive many weeks, or even days, they are both in such a state, Jane deprived of speech and the use of her limbs, and Anne lying almost quite [helpless]¹ from fatigue and anxiety.

I hope that you will write soon, and believe me to remain yours most affectionately,

CHARLOTTE SOPHIA SCOTT.

39 CASTLE STREET,
Friday, January 21, 1820.

¹ Blank in the original.

XIII

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I received your kind letter two evenings since,¹ and answer it thus soon, as I wish to be the first to tell you that I have at last made up my mind to marry Mr. Lockhart, and I know how sincerely you interest yourself in anything that may happen to me, and how affectionate your wishes are for my happiness. Anything that I may say to prepossess you in his favour, in the present state of my feelings towards him, might appear to you overdrawn, but Papa has the highest opinion of him, and his opinion is worth all the world to me. That I might have made a much higher marriage in point of rank and wealth I have little doubt, but I am not one who can be persuaded that

¹ This letter is not dated. It must have been written soon after the middle of February 1820, when, as Lockhart writes (vol. iii., p. 362, chap. xlvii.), ‘it was arranged that I should marry his (Scott’s) daughter in the course of the spring.’ The marriage took place in Castle Street on April 29, 1820, ‘more Scotico in the evening.’ It would be impertinent to offer any comments on this letter, beyond the remark that it shows Sophia’s affection for her old governess.

happiness can depend upon these two alone. I hope that you will be in town sometime soon, that I might introduce you to Lockhart, as I am sure, at least I hope, that you will like him. Papa goes to London in March, and expects to be down before the end of April, and to bring Walter with him. I am very sorry to hear that Miss Tovey is so unwell, but would fain hope that the fine weather coming in may be of service to her. Poor Miss Russell is rather better, but still in a deplorable state of health. Miss Anne is a little stronger: if they could but get well enough to be removed to some other house, it would be a great step towards their recovery, as everything puts them in mind of the friends they have lost.

Papa and Mamma, Anne and Charles, join me in best love to you, and believe me, my dear Miss Millar, ever to remain yours most affectionately,

CHARLOTTE SOPHIA SCOTT.

39 CASTLE STREET,

Sunday morning.

XIV

May 1820 (?).¹

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—Mr. Lockhart and myself have arrived this moment here to remain all night, and I could not possibly pass through Stirling without making an attempt to see you. Would you then, when you receive this, put on your hat and come to the inn and see me.

I remain, dear Miss Millar, your affectionate friend and pupil,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

Wednesday evening.

XV

ABBOTSFORD,

4 November.²

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—Papa has had a letter from Mrs. Bolton, who seems to

¹ This letter also is undated; it may have been written soon after Sophia's marriage. She is still Miss Millar's pupil; but any inference as to date is doubtful, for five years later Mrs. Lockhart is still Miss Millar's pupil. (*See* Letter *xxi.*)

² Between the dates of this and of the thirteenth letter many things had happened. Scott had become 'Sir Walter.' 'The baronetcy was conferred on him, not in consequence

be quite uncertain whether you accepted her proposal or not, so Papa thinks you had better let Mrs. Bolton know by writing to her yourself. Charles left us some weeks ago to a school in South Wales. Mr. Williams¹ is the name of his master; he

of any ministerial suggestion, but by the King personally, and of his own unsolicited motion, and when the poet kissed his hand, he said to him, "I shall always reflect with pleasure on Sir Walter Scott's having been the first creation of my reign." After his baronetcy was gazetted on April 2nd he hurried home, for he was anxious to have his daughter married before the unlucky month of May began. (Lockhart, vol. iii., pp. 376-8, chap. xlvii.) Soon after his daughter's marriage he received from Oxford and from Cambridge the offer of the honorary degree of Doctor in Civil Law, an offer which, to his regret, he was not then, nor afterwards, able to accept. He perhaps, as well as Lady Scott, was 'quite tired of people' before the end of that hospitable summer and autumn, though the genial host concealed his weariness.

This is the first of Anne Scott's letters published in this collection, and shows that 'spirit of satire' which, five years later, her father affected to deplore in the 'honest downright good Scots lass.' She was now nearly eighteen, an age at which clever girls find their tongues, and use them freely. Who Miss Ramsay was I have not inquired: the epithet applied to her may have been contributed by Walter, but the gloss is likely to have been Anne's.

¹ Mr. Williams, Vicar of Lampeter and Archdeacon, was four years later appointed Rector of the Edinburgh Academy. He had been Lockhart's intimate friend and companion at Oxford. (Vol. iii., p. 420, chap. i.)

is strongly recommended by Lockhart and Mr. ——— (?). I was very sorry to part with him, but it will be of so much consequence to himself to be from home, that it would be wrong to wish for him to remain. Sophia and Lockhart spent six weeks here this summer; she went to Edinburgh a short time ago, in which part of the world we will see her soon, as we leave this in a few days. Lord and Lady Compton left us yesterday; also the Miss Baillies. I like Miss Joana Baillie extremely; no one would ever guess by her behaviour that she was an authoress. Sir Alexander Don and a great pack of people come here to-day; Mamma is quite tired of people, as we have never been alone all the summer. Mr. and Mrs. Skene have gone abroad for a year or two. Miss Skene¹ paid us a visit this summer and is still *the*

¹ Miss Skene was the daughter of James Skene of Rubislaw. She lived at Oxford for the last thirty years of her long life, and was known there for her good works. She was a Scots lady of the highest type, combining kindness with shrewdness, the terror of impostors, and a wise helper of all who deserved help.

same. We had a letter from Walter the other day; he is quite well and very gay in Dublin, as he has got in the first set. He saw Miss Ramsay, still, though very much against her will, a *blooming Virgin*. I must now conclude my epistle: I hope you will write to me soon. Papa and Mamma unite in best love, and believe me to remain yours affectionately,

ANNE SCOTT.

P.S.—Direct to Mrs. Bolton, East India College, Hertford.

1820.

XVI

49 (GREAT) KING STREET (EDINBURGH),
Monday morning, March 26, 1821.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I am afraid you must have thought me very unkind never to have answered your kind letter of enquiry that I received so very long ago, but you will cease to be angry when I tell you that this is only the second time I

have taken up the pen since I was confined, and for two months before. In spite of all my bad health before, I think you would say that my little boy¹ is as pretty a baby as you ever saw, and, what is still better, he is very healthy. Papa has not returned from London where he went to see my aunt Carpenter, who wished much to return to

¹ The little boy was John Hugh Lockhart, the 'Hugh Littlejohn' of the *Tales of a Grandfather*. There are few, if any, passages in Sir Walter's Diary more pathetic than those in which he writes of his sorrow for the sufferings and approaching death of his beloved grandson, whose health began to fail in 1825, and who died in 1831. 'The poor child's voice,' Sir Walter writes, 'was day and night in his ear.' He speaks of him as 'a child almost too good for this world; beautiful in features, and, though spoiled by every one, having one of the sweetest tempers, as well as the quickest intellect, I ever saw; a sense of humour quite extraordinary in a child; and, owing to the general notice which was taken of him, a great deal more information than suited his hours.' Johnnie must have reminded him of another gifted and short-lived child, whom, years before, he used to carry to and from Castle Street in his plaid, 'Pet Marjorie,' authoress of an inimitable poem on a domestic tragedy. To his affection for Hugh Littlejohn we owe a history which may not be scientific, and might have been condemned by Lord Acton, had he criticised it, along with Carlyle's *French Revolution*, and Froude's and Macaulay's histories. Sir Walter would have been 'justified' in good company; but, if called up for judgment, he would probably have been pardoned, as a grandfather. (Lockhart, vol. iv., p. 487, chap. lxx.)

Scotland with him, but she is in such indifferent health that Dr. Baillie will not hear of her moving till summer, and Papa is to be with us about the beginning of next month. We are very anxious for his arrival, as the baby is not to be christened till he comes. I hope that we are to see you sometime soon in Edinburgh; is there any chance of it? After Papa has been here, and as soon as I am strong enough, Lockhart, myself, and the baby, are going to Germiston for a fortnight, but must be back at the terrible moving time, as we have bought a most capital house from top to bottom in Northumberland Street. Charles is quite well, and likes his master very much. Walter is still in Ireland, and at present has the command of a small detachment at Cappoquin in the county of Waterford. Lockhart joins me in best wishes to you, and believe me, dear Miss Millar, to remain very affectionately yours,

CHARLOTTE SOPHIA LOCKHART.

XVII

CHIEFSWOOD,¹ MELROSE,
Sunday.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I am truly sorry to hear you have been so very uncomfortable with Mrs. Eules, but, as it was the case, I think you did quite right in leaving her as soon as possible, and we must hope for better luck another time. I think you should write to ask your friends to enquire for you, and Mrs. Ross² amongst the rest, as she is very likely to hear of

¹ Chiefswood was a cottage near Melrose, where Lockhart and his wife took up their residence in the summer of 1821; the first of several seasons which they remembered as the happiest in their lives. It was within easy reach of Abbotsford, and Sir Walter used to stay there while he superintended the completion of the stately house which was to take the place of the farm-house which stood ‘on the scene of Kerr of Cessford’s slaughter.’ (Lockhart, vol. ii., p. 176, chap. xxiii.)

² Mrs. Ross was the Catherine Hume of Letter x.; now much improved with ‘all nonsense put out of her head’ by the ‘sensible young man’ whom she had married. Dr. and Mrs. Ross visited Sir Walter a few weeks before his death. With some difficulty he recognised the doctor, but on hearing Mrs. Ross’s voice exclaimed at once ‘Isn’t that Kate Hume?’ (Lockhart, vol. v., p. 425, chap. lxxxiii.)

something that may suit, and you have not a more sincere friend. I will write to her soon myself, and will mention you in it, but I think you should write yourself. The Humes have gone a little tour to England, but will be home soon. Mrs. Ross is to be quite stationary in George Street this summer, and herself and little girl are quite well and strong; indeed I never saw her looking better. I wish much you had been in Edinburgh during the King's visit,¹ as, independent of the feeling that the old Halls at Holyrood were lighted up again after a lapse of so many years, the two processions were quite magnificent, and

¹ The King came to Edinburgh on August 15, 1822. The Cardinal of York was dead, and the stoutest Jacobites transferred their allegiance from the Stuarts to the House of Hanover; some of them reluctantly, for the only member of that house who had touched the soil of Scotland, was 'the cruel conqueror of Culloden, the "butcher" Cumberland.' Sir Walter held that George iv. acquired a title to the Throne, *de jure*, on the death of the last descendant of James vii. of Scotland; and welcomed his King with an enthusiasm which has provoked both sneers and laughter. For a defence of his loyalty to one who was in part a Stuart, see Lockhart, chaps. lxxvi. and lxxxiv. Sir Walter laughed himself at the fate of the glass out of which his Majesty had drunk his health.

all conducted with such order. We met, though every part of the streets were crowded to excess, and, what appeared very remarkable, every person well dressed.¹ The King said to Papa that ‘Never King was better received by his people, and never King felt it more.’ He said he never was so happy in his life, and goes back with a very grand idea of his Scottish subjects. He wrote a letter to Papa expressing how very much he was pleased, and thanking him in the most handsome manner for the trouble he had taken.

Brother Walter did not come home, as there was not time for him, but Charles was so fortunate as to be down for the holidays, and remained during the whole fun; he and cousin Walter acted the part of pages to Sir Alex. Keith in the two processions, and performed their parts to admiration. Charles is grown very tall, and looked quite beautiful in his page’s dress.

We came out here four days ago, and

¹ The reader may interpret and amend this obscure passage as he pleases.

remain till the 12th of November. All this gaiety has cut up our summer very much. Papa and Mamma only came to Abbotsford the day before yesterday. The new house at Abbotsford is up to the top story and really is quite a palace.

Baby is quite well, and walks quite stoutly now. Let me hear from you very soon, and, if I can do anything to forward your views, let me know. I shall be upon the look out, but have a bad chance of hearing anything suitable here. With most affectionate love, believe me to remain very affectionately yours,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

September 3, 1822.

XVIII

ABBOTSFORD,

Monday, 8th September 1823.¹

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—Many thanks to you for your letter; it gave us all great

¹ This letter was written soon after 'one of the happiest months of Scott's life' and of his family's. Anne, now

pleasure to know that you were so comfortable with your friend Mrs. Bathurst. We have had a great many people staying here this summer, and amongst others the Miss Edgeworths. I like Miss E. very much, though she talks a great deal, and does not care to hear others talk. There was a dreadful scene at parting.¹ The great Maria nearly went into fits; she had taken such a fancy to us all. Her sisters were very nice girls, both clever, and one very pretty. There is here at present a gentleman who has been farther in Greece than any Englishman has been known to go, and has been present at the dread-

nearly twenty, is full of girlish fun and paradox. Her utterances explain themselves. She had, by this time, considerable experience of the world and of society of various kinds; far more at least than is usually within the reach of girls of her age; and was a keen observer, humorous and malicious in the French, but not in the English sense, as her later letters show.

¹ Miss Edgeworth 'never saw Abbotsford again during his (Sir Walter's) life.' In Lockhart (vol. iii., pp. 120-35, chap. lix.) there is a description of Miss Edgeworth's visit, and of one paid by 'another honoured and welcome guest,' Mr. J. L. Adolphus, which gives a charming picture of Sir Walter and his family at this happy time. Anne's letter adds something to the picture of the 'great Maria.'

ful massacres of the Greeks, and saw a hundred of the most beautiful Turkish women drowned. A most blessed country to live in. *This happy man* was also a long time a prisoner of the Arabs.

We had a very happy family party for a month this summer, as both my brothers and my cousin¹ were here, and the Lockharts, but I am sorry to say that they have now all gone. Walter to Sandhurst, Charles to Wales, and my cousin to Addiscombe. I do not think you would know Charles; he has grown so tall, and is really like what he is so ambitious to be, *a man*. Him and his dear friend, William Surtees,² left us about a week ago. Walter has had another return of ague, but is now quite well, and likes Sandhurst very much in-

¹ Walter, son of Thomas Scott, third brother of Sir Walter. Thomas Scott was once thought to be the author of *Waverley*. He was 'a man of infinite humour and excellent parts,' but could not have written *Waverley*. (Lockhart, vol. i., p. 10, chap. i., and vol. iii., pp. 386-90, chap. xlviii.)

² William Surtees, a school-fellow of Charles Scott's at Lampeter and his chief friend at Oxford, son of Surtees of Mainsforth, a learned antiquarian and an early and dear friend of Sir Walter's. (Lockhart, vol. iii., p. 520, chap. liv., and vol. ii., p. 126, chap. xx.)

deed. I suppose Mrs. Bathurst's son is also in the senior department. Lockhart and Sophia are quite well, and as for little Johnny, he has grown so stout and so healthy, ever since he has got all his teeth. He was very very ill in the early part of the summer; indeed we were very much alarmed about him, so you may think what pleasure it gives us to see him so much improved in health. Johnny is in a fair way to be spoilt. Were you not very sorry to hear of poor John Macdonald's death?¹ There is only one son left, who is in very bad health; so you may think what great distress the poor Macdonalds are in; besides, poor John was such a favourite with all his family. We had all the Buccleuch family here the other day, and Lady Todella's² intended bridegroom, the Hon. Capt. Cust. I must own I was a little

¹ Possibly a son of the Laird of Staffa, whom Sir Walter visited in 1810, on his first voyage to the Hebrides. (Lockhart, vol. ii., p. 133, chap. xxi.)

² 'Lady Todella,' a charming name, due to my copyist, was Lady Isabella, as Mrs. Maxwell-Scott informs me. I have had the name thus printed, as being very creditable to its author.

surprised when I first saw him, as he is oldish, very plain, and looks as if he *could be cross*. The young Duke has grown much taller and stronger; he is really a very delightful young man. As for Lady Anne, she has grown *quite a beauty*. A new set of teeth has improved her to such a degree that Miss Russel finds herself a good deal better. She is at Lucia just now. One of the old Miss Fraser Tytlers has married a cousin of her own. They will be very poor, but it is all they have, as they have been engaged for eleven years. I wonder they did not change their minds. I am sure I would, particularly if I was the gentleman. Now I must really stop.¹ Papa and Mamma beg to be kindly remembered to you, and believe me, my dear Miss Millar, to remain yours affectionately,

ANNE SCOTT.

I am sorry I have no news for you, but I am afraid that I must invent, if I was to

¹ Yes, indeed.

attempt to tell any news. Except, by the bye, that Abbotsford is lighted with Gas. You can have no idea how beautiful it looks; but the first time that Mrs. Bathurst goes to Scotland you must come and spend some time here, and you will see Abbotsford much changed. We have got into the new drawing-room, and also into some of the bedrooms. I must now conclude. I am afraid that you will not be able to read this, as I write it in such haste. I hope you will write soon, and tell us how you are coming on. Sophia intends writing to you very soon. I gave her your letter, you will be happy to hear.

XIX

ABBOTSFORD,
March 10, 1824.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I am quite ashamed when I think of the time that has elapsed since I have received your letter, particularly as Sophia wished me to return

you her very best thanks for the cap you were so good as to send her, and, though she has been so unfortunate as to lose the poor little baby it was intended for, yet nevertheless she is very sensible of your kindness in thinking of her. I am sure you will be happy to hear that she is now quite well, and has recovered both her health and spirits. Lockhart goes to London immediately, and Sophia and Johnny are to come here. Poor little Johnny has been very ill all winter, but is now a great deal better, and the medical people have now no fear for him, though very great care will be required for a long time before he regains his strength. Walter was with us for six weeks at Christmas, and Charles has just come down from Oxford, where he has been entering his name.¹ He remains with us till October, when he returns to Oxford. Papa finds Walter much improved in his studies, and is quite delighted with him. I think you would find him much changed, as he has

¹ At Brasenose College.

grown very tall and stout. Edinburgh has been very gay. I went out a great deal. We had a very gay ball given by thirty Bachelors: it was a Fancy one, and a great many people went in character; I however *did not*. Charles Sharpe¹ was admirable; he went as his Grandfather, and Lord Castlereagh as a Caucasian. By the bye, Lord Castlereagh is a person that all Edinburgh is running after just now. He has spent the winter there by way of attending the classes, or rather the balls, and as he is very handsome, very good-humoured, and very fond of dancing and flirting, you may think that he is a great favourite. Mrs. Ross is quite well, and has recovered her fit of goodness, and as for Agnes, the last time I saw her she was in blue satin with a silver flower in her hair, and had even some thoughts of going to the Bachelors' Ball. Is Mrs. Bathurst gone to Bath? I am afraid that you will find it dull at North

¹ Charles Kirpatrick Sharpe, the wit, antiquary, artist, 'minor' poet, and man of fashion, whom Sir Walter describes in his Diary, November 20, 1825. (Lockhart, vol. iv., pp. 351-2, chap. lxxv.) He was a Scottish Horace Walpole.

Creek, particularly as you say the neighbourhood is disagreeable, for, though the country is very delightful in summer, yet in winter it is very sombre, unless one has society. However, I am quite glad to get out here, as I am quite tired of dissipation; besides, I have really been far from well¹ this winter with constant colds, and, what is more wearing out than anything, constant toothache. I do not know if I told you that my aunt, Mrs. Thomas Scott, and my cousins have been in Scotland for six months. They have been of course a great deal at Abbotsford, and I like my cousins very much. Anne, the eldest, is not handsome, but what one would call very comely; she is a very sensible and well-informed girl. Eliza² is a very nice little girl, and will, I think, be very pretty. As

¹ Alas! her health was failing, though she was still bright and cheerful.

² About this cousin Eliza, Mrs. Maxwell-Scott writes: 'My cousin, Baroness von Appell (grand-daughter of Sir Walter's brother Thomas), will be one of those most interested in these letters. Her mother was the Eliza mentioned by my great-aunt Anne in one letter, and was a most clever and delightful old lady, whose reading aloud of *Emma* is one of the remembrances of my girlhood.'

for Mrs. Thomas Scott, she has been everything that is kind and agreeable, but heaven knows how long it will last. I have no news for you, neither Births or marriages. We are very busy painting the house just now, and Papa will soon have the pleasure of removing the Books to the new Library. The Pringles of Haining and Yair¹ are all flourishing, and so are all the Fergusons. I must now conclude. Papa and Mamma desire to be kindly remembered to you, and believe me to remain, my dear Miss Millar, yours affectionately,

A. SCOTT.

XX

Wednesday, 23rd November 1824,

CASTLE STREET.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—Many thanks to you for your letter. I should have written to you before this, but I very

¹ Yair lay a few miles down the Tweed from Ashestiel. The Pringles were intimate friends of the Scotts.

foolishly lost your address. We have been here for rather more than a week, and I think I never saw Papa and Mamma in better health than they are at present. Sophia, I am sorry to say, had an attack of inflammation about two months ago, and, though she is quite well, yet it has left her thin, and apt to catch cold on the least change of weather; however, I trust that with great care she will soon be quite well. As for Johnny, he is as well as possible, and has not had for many months those alarming attacks of fever which he was so subject to, and he is, I assure you, a great beauty,¹ and as great a wit. He makes Lockhart very idle, for he does nothing but play with him all day, and teach him all sort of absurd speeches. Charles is at Oxford, very *important* as you may suppose, as this is his first term. He says he likes Oxford very much. Walter's examination takes place at Sandhurst next month. He comes down here immediately after, but whether he is to

¹ See note on p. 80.

get a troop in his Regiment, or to go as Aid de Camp to Sir Frederick Adam, I do not know, as he cannot make up his mind which is best. Papa has gone to-day to attend poor Mrs. Rutherford's funeral, who died very suddenly last week.¹ She made herself very unhappy the last few years by her very peevish, unhappy, temper. I should think it must be rather a relief than otherwise, her death to her daughters. What a dreadful fire has been in Edinburgh, but I suppose you have read it all in the newspapers. Lockhart was out a day and night with the yeomanry, and though he kept *his spirits up by pouring spirits down*, he was very ill afterwards from fatigue. It must have been an awful sight, the burning of the Church. The people here insist that it was all owing to Dr. Brunton having subscribed to the Musical Festival.² There has been the

¹ Anne's grand-aunt.

² Dr. Brunton, it was thought, had brought on himself a 'judgment' for having subscribed to so questionable an amusement as a musical festival. The old abhorrence of sports and pleasures, described in *Old Mortality*, was not

most magnificent subscriptions here for the poor people who have been burnt out, so that they will be richer for their burning. I am sorry to hear that you do not like the part of the country you are in, and also that you find it necessary to change your situation. I hope you will come to Scotland before you fix yourself in another. I think you will find a great change in Abbotsford. The library and drawing-room are now finished and furnished, and are both magnificent. The entrance Hall is very large, and fitted up with armour and painted glass. It really is very striking. We had a very great many people here this last summer. Lady Compton and her children spent some weeks with us. She is, if possible, improved in her musical studies since her residence abroad, but we have had an immense deal of good music this last year, and have got such a magnificent piano, which stands in the

extinct, though waning, in the Edinburgh of eighty years ago. Compare 'Jupiter' Carlyle's account of the condemnation pronounced by the 'strict party' on another 'Moderate' clergyman, the author of *Douglas*.

library, which is a most admirable music-room. I saw the Humes yesterday looking remarkably well. Agnes is no longer holy and wears a *white silk bonnet*. As for Mrs. Ross, she has had so many children she really has not time to be good. Edinburgh is very dull just now. There is nothing going on. I shall be glad when Christmas comes, when we go to Abbotsford, and are to be very gay and have a large party in the house.¹

The Lockharts are to be with us, and my aunt and cousins, Mrs. Thomas Scott's family. They really are very nice girls, and one of them is very pretty, and I think that our good friends, the Miss Russells, helped to make up stories of Mrs. Thomas Scott, who appears to me to be a very agreeable good-natured person.² I am afraid that you will not be able to read this horrid scrawl. I write in great haste, as I am engaged to spend a quiet day

¹ For an account given by Captain Basil Hall of this Christmas party, see Lockhart, vol. iv., pp. 192-232, chap. lxi.

² The fears shown in Letter xix. as to the duration of Mrs. Scott's kindness and good nature had been proved groundless.

with Lady Alvanley¹ and her daughters, who have just come to town, and I wish not to lose a day's post. Sophia means to write to you very soon. I hope you will not be long in writing, and tell us if you have settled any plan for the future. Papa and Mamma desire to be kindly remembered to you, and believe me, my dear Miss Millar, to remain yours very sincerely,

ANNE SCOTT.

XXI

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR, — You must excuse these very few lines, as I have so very much to write just now, but I wish to be the very first to inform you of brother Walter's approaching marriage with a niece of Lady Ferguson, Miss Jobson of

¹ Lady Alvanley, wife of the statesman and the wit. She died a few weeks later than the date of this letter. The arrangements for her funeral devolved on Sir Walter. She was buried in the Chapel of Holyrood, the service being performed by Mr. (afterwards Dean) Ramsay, who read the service also at the funeral of Lady Scott. (Lockhart, vol. iv., p. 510, chap. lxx.)

Lochore in Fife.¹ The young lady is everything we could wish for, very pretty, sensible, and has about two thousand a year, no bad thing for a young soldier. Papa and Mamma are quite delighted at the match, and one of them would have written, but they are so busy they have time for nothing. The marriage takes place almost immediately, on account of Walter's leave of absence being very limited, and they leave this for Cork, where Walter's regiment is stationed at present. I will write whenever the ceremony is over more fully, but have only now time to say we are all well and happy, and remain your very affectionate pupil,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

25 NORTH STREET, EDINBURGH,

20th January 1825.

¹ 'The pretty heiress of Lochore.' The marriage was arranged at the Christmas party mentioned in the last letter. See Lockhart, vol. iv., p. 233, chap. lxii., and later, in the same chapter, Sir Walter's affectionate and humorous letters to his new daughter.

XXII

ABBOTSFORD,

Monday morning, April 10, 1825.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—Many thanks to you for your letter. I have not forgot your request of getting letters from Papa, and I told him of it, but he says that he is afraid that his acquaintances in London are not of the sort that would do you any good; and except a very good-natured, clever Welsh lady, whose husband is high in the Church, he knows of no other. But pray write when the time comes that you wish for the letters, and perhaps he will be able to think of some other ladies.

Papa, Mamma, and I have been living for about a month here very quietly. We have the most beautiful weather that ever was seen. It is quite summer, and there is large plots of hyacinths and jonquils in full blow before the door. We are not a little anxious to hear of Walter and his bride's arrival in Ireland, but I daresay that

letters have been lost. I have scarcely seen my new sister, but by all accounts she is very amiable and appears very happy. We had a letter from Charles, who is staying at Stowe at the Duke of Buckingham's. How he has got there heaven knows. His letter was full of what the Duke said to him and what *he said to the Duke*. My cousin Walter is at Chatham, and gives Papa much satisfaction with the manner he has gone on with his studies. Mrs. Scott has gone with her two daughters to Cheltenham, to live for some time with a brother of hers. You will be surprised to hear that the Miss Russells are really coming to live at Ashestiel. Colonel Russell, they say, is on his way home by land, and is to meet them in Italy. I can scarcely believe that he is so near home, for he has so often disappointed them. I went to see poor Mrs. Charles Erskine¹ to-day, and found her very ill. I never saw a person so altered

¹ The wife of Charles Erskine, Sheriff-Substitute of Selkirkshire.

as she is by grief, and the widow's dress makes her look even worse. She will not suffer in her income by her husband's death, for he died very rich. Your friends the Humes are quite well. Agnes is no *longer good*.¹ She dresses in white satin, and goes to *Balls*, and as for Mrs. Ross, she is so occupied with her children and her own very indifferent health, that she scarcely goes to church *once a Sunday*. Our old friend *and sinner*, Miss Skene, is just the same. She is looking about for a companion to go to Paris with, and from thence to Italy, to bask for some time under an Italian sky. I am sorry I have no news for you, not even my marriage, which, I am *told*, is *fixed* for next week, to a very rich Mr. Henderson, who has bought Eldon Hall; and now, as I have not even *seen* the bridegroom, it is a little hard to have so foolish a report sent about. Even Papa is not believed when

¹ This is the third criticism of the Humes and their backslidings. Did Anne and Sophia like them? The good Miss Skene also, it is hinted, was not impeccable.

he denies it, for he is always told that if I do not marry Mr. Henderson, I *must* marry Major Norman Pringle, whom we used to call the elegant major long ago. Talking of elegant people, we have Sir Alex. Don,¹ a pattern of *Domestic happiness*. His wife is just going to be confined, and he stays always at home to take care of her. We had a most beautiful Fancy Ball a few weeks ago in Edinburgh, where I appeared in a most beautiful Spanish dress. I was so fortunate as to be intimate with a Spanish lady, who gave me one of her dresses to have one made by. It was very magnificent, black and gold, with a long black veil. My friend, the Donna, was quite pleased with my appearance in it.

¹ Sir Alexander Don of Newtown (Letter xv.) was a man of fashion much connected with the turf, and somewhat of a spendthrift. Sir Walter lived in 'much friendship with him,' despite their different habits, for his manners were extremely pleasing, and he had a taste for literature and the fine arts—'a most accomplished gentleman.' His indolence prevented him from turning his real abilities 'towards acquiring the distinction he might have attained.' (Lockhart, vol. iv., p. 498, chap. lxx.) He was the father of an actor of some distinction known in London more than forty years ago.

Lockhart and Sophia are in Edinburgh, and there is no chance of our seeing them till May, when we return to town to remain till July, when Papa talks of going to Ireland for a few weeks, where I shall certainly *go with him*. I must now conclude this horrid scrawl. I depend on your writing and letting me know when you wish for letters. Is there any chance of your coming to Scotland this summer? You will find us in high order, and amidst other improvements, we have got a most admirable Pianoforte. Papa and Mamma desire to be kindly remembered to you, and believe me, my dear Miss Millar, to remain yours affectionately,

A. SCOTT.

XXIII

25 NORTH STREET, EDINBURGH,

April 24, 1825.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I would have written long since to you, but have been

prevented first by being unwell myself with an attack which, when it comes on, makes me unfit for anything; and, lastly, my poor little Johnny has been very unwell for a fortnight with fever and cough. The cough was so violent that the doctor was suspicious that it was Hooping-cough, which we had flattered ourselves he had had over, but, as within these four days it has left him, we think it had been only the Influenza, which is raging among young and old. Just now he is so much better that I am going to set out with him to-morrow to the west country, to remain at Germistown for three weeks, and I hope the change of air will restore him quite. He is grown very tall, and speaks, I rejoice to say, rather more intelligibly than when you heard him last. He puts me very much in mind of brother Charles in everything. We heard from Walter and his lady the other day. They are now in the Dublin Barracks, the regiment having left Cork a fortnight after they joined it. She seems to like her new mode of life very

much, and a great change it must be following a regiment, from living in the most humdrum manner with her mother, and never seeing a soul. I think you will like her very much, for she is really a very sensible nice young woman.

Charles is by this time returned to Oxford, after having spent the Easter holidays among his English friends. Among the rest, he had found his way to the Duke of Buckingham's, for he is the one of the family that is always making great friends. Papa, Mamma, and Anne have been at Abbotsford since the 12th of March. I wrote to Anne to remind her of the letters you wish, and should think by this time you must have heard from her, unless she has been very lazy. I am sorry you are going to leave Mrs. Bathurst's family, as you seem attached to her, and it is such a chance finding a comfortable family to live with, but you must know best, and have some very good reason for doing it. I think your Kensington plan a very good one, for you are much more

likely to hear of something that will suit in England. Here the fashion is to send the children to all kind of classes, with a nursery governess to attend them, till thirteen or fourteen, and then send them to a French or English School. I will write however if anything should cast up, and hope to hear from you soon. With best love, believe me ever to remain your affectionate friend,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

XXIV

ABBOTSFORD,

Sunday night, [October ?] 1825.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I found your letter here on my return from the Ednes, and meant to have answered it much sooner, but we have had so many people here, that I have never had a moment's time to myself, particularly as Mamma has not been very well, and had to keep her own room a good deal, so all the trouble of entertaining visitors has fallen

on me. Mamma desires me to say that she believes she is indebted to Mr. Thistlewaite for a quantity of game that came to her from the Highlands. Mamma begs that you will have the kindness to thank him for it. Our tour to Ireland¹

¹ The tour to Ireland, Wales, and the English Lakes was made in July and August. A full account of it is given in Lockhart, vol. iv., pp. 280-313, chap. lxiii. Sir Walter was accompanied by Anne and his son-in-law, whose description of their expedition is charming in itself, and valuable as throwing light on the social and political condition of Ireland in 1825. For the travellers those seven or eight weeks were the last of unclouded happiness which they were to enjoy; the calamities of 1826—that *année terrible* in the history of the Scott family—were fast approaching.

Lockhart modestly disclaims any intention of discussing 'vexed questions of politics and administration,' but in Ireland these questions lie on the surface, and 'he who runs may read.' He says that he will note 'particulars more immediately connected with the person of Scott,' and few pages of his book tell us more about Scott's geniality and boyish spirits, and vivid interest in the beauties of Nature, and in the history and inhabitants of any country in which he travelled. He received in Ireland the heartiest welcome from high and low; from the Lord-Lieutenant to the poorest 'struggler,' a word which he well said 'deserves to be classical.' At Dublin they were joined by Captain and Mrs. Scott, and with them visited the Edgeworths at Edgeworthstown, and saw what made Sir Walter say that 'to talk of the misery of Ireland, at this time, is to speak of the illness of a *malade imaginaire*.' The real misery of Ireland

is now so old a story that I can only say I was delighted with it, and shall always consider the time I spent there as the happiest time I ever spent. We were a week at the Lakes, and paid a visit to Mr. Bolton, where we met with Mr. Canning, with whom I was quite delighted. Then we proceeded to Lowther Castle, to pay a visit of some days. It is a most magnificent place, and I liked the Lonsdale family extremely. When we returned we found Sophia and Johnny much the better of the quiet life they led in our absence. In short, dear little

he saw in Kerry, and it depressed even his buoyant spirits. His depression, however, was frequently relieved by displays of Irish wit and cheerfulness, which much delighted him, and which he often 'capped' with Scotch stories, good for the Englishmen to read who accept the dictum of Sydney Smith. Why did Sir Walter not write a novel about Ireland, which he liked or loved so well?

From Ireland they went to Wales, and thence to Windermere, where Christopher North entertained them, and they saw Wordsworth and Canning, the latter 'looking poorly, and an old man: he had not long to live. At Keswick they saw Southey 'in his unrivalled library,' and after visiting Lord and Lady Lonsdale, returned to Abbotsford on September 1. They must have looked back, in the sad years which followed, with fond regret to that happy time.

Johnny is quite a different creature, and I fain would hope that all anxiety on his account is now over.

The Miss Russells are returned in good health and much better spirits than I ever expected to see them in. Jane walks and *speaks quite well*. They are now staying at Yair, but are very soon coming here, when I shall be truly happy to see them. Charles is at home just now, and begs to be kindly remembered to you. He does nothing but wage war with the Blackcock and Partridges. He was making a tour in the Highlands for some weeks, and returned highly delighted with them. As for Walter, he is quite a sober married man, never dines at mess, to the great surprise of his brother officers, but remains quietly at home with his wife. They went with us to Kilarny, and also Miss Edgeworth and her sister, when we met with no adventures. Though everybody tried to persuade us not to go so far South, yet, though we even travelled very late at night, yet everything was quite quiet, and,

except the places where the doors were open all night, and the beggars slept in the passage, the accommodation was very tolerable, and we were well repaid by the Lakes at Kilmory, which are quite magnificent. On our return we went through Wales, which is very beautiful, and the *quiet* and *want of beggars* made a most agreeable variety from Ireland, where there is great noise and *many* beggars. We spent a few hours with Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby,¹ who are two very absurd-looking old ladies, dressed like *old gentlemen*, in habits made like a man's coat, and their hair cut quite short, and powdered. They seem extremely fond of scandal, and know everybody's death or marriage. Lockhart's brother has given his family great pleasure by the bride he has chosen, who is very amiable, and has twelve thousand pounds. Poor Mrs. Lockhart was in great distress at parting with one of her sons, who has just sailed for

¹ For a full account of the 'Ladies of Llangollen,' see Lockhart's letter (vol. iii., pp. 308-10, chap. lxiii.).

India, so the marriage of Laurance has done her a great deal of good. By the bye, we were very unlucky at not seeing Mrs. Fry's brother, I forget his name, and Lady Harriet. We were from home, and they just left their letter of introduction, and went on South. Is Lady Harriet as handsome as her brother Ld. Erroll, and her sisters, who are *quite beautiful*? Sophia and Lockhart are at Chiefswood just now, but we see them every day. I am very glad to hear that you like your situation, and the young ladies being grown up must be companions to you, which must make it very pleasant. We have two very pleasant visitors just now, Lady Ravensworth and her son Mr. Liddell; they are both very accomplished, and unaffected, which makes them very pleasant to their friends. I must now conclude, having only left myself room to remain yours affectionately,

ANNE SCOTT.

I hope you will write soon, and tell us

how you are going on. Pray excuse this horrid scrawl, as I have written this in a great hurry, as I must go to play the agreeable to Lady Ravensworth. Mamma and Papa beg to be remembered to you.

XXV

1826.¹

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—You must not think I have been neglectful of

¹ This letter is undated: it was written probably in the February of this sad year. The writer shows herself her father's daughter—steadfast and hopeful, 'equal to either fortune.' She does not underrate the calamity, but sees that it means 'a future life of study and labour' for her father, 'who has done so much.' A few months before the date of this letter, on November 20, 1825, Sir Walter had begun his Diary, or Journal, entitled, *Sir Walter Scott of Abbotsford, Bart., his Gurnal*. On the title-page he adds, as a footnote to 'Gurnal,' 'A hard word, so spelt on the authority of Miss Sophia Scott, now Mrs. Lockhart.' (Lockhart, vol. iv., p. 349, chap. lxxv.)

The Journal is the noblest of Sir Walter's works, and shows the real character of the man. No one, surely, can read that record of unflinching energy and heroism, of troubles keenly felt but bravely met, without feeling encouraged and strengthened to meet troubles of his own.

The Journal was kept without interruption for six years, till his departure for Italy in 1831. It begins cheerily, and

you. I had not been here a fortnight when I found out your residence in Connaught Terrace, called, and was told it was uncertain when you were to be in town. Since that the many disagreeable things that have happened amongst us have prevented my writing to you. You must have seen by the papers, Constable the bookseller, and through him, Mr. Ballantyne's failure, and am sure you will grieve to hear that Papa has lost the greater part of his hard-worked-for for-

the entries are minute and full: it ends with a good-humoured, if somewhat testy, paternal complaint of the girls 'breaking loose' and talking politics—then a dangerous subject—in all weathers, and in all sorts of company; and making slaves of the naval officers at Portsmouth.

From the *Journal*, and from chapters lxiv. and lxv. of Lockhart's *Life*, can be gathered an account of the causes and nature of the financial disaster which ruined Sir Walter's life, and of the means by which he half-cleared himself of a debt of £130,000, by labours which broke and killed him. He died for a point of honour, as became a noble gentleman. Abbotsford was saved: 'poor 39' was sold. It is impossible, within the limits of a note, to give even an outline of the circumstances which led to the failure of Constable and Ballantyne. The commercial crisis of 1825, the reckless daring of Constable, the carelessness of Ballantyne, and, it must be added, Scott's own negligence, are sufficient explanations.

tune by these sad events. Abbotsford, we trust, will remain, but the house in Castle Street is to be sold, and Mamma and Anne mean to reside constantly in the country; Papa only going to Edinburgh when his professional duties call him, and then living in lodgings. Though many worse things may happen to a family besides loss of fortune, yet one cannot but feel sorrow to think that such a man should have to labour so hard after having done so much. As for Lockhart and myself, the smash has also taken what we could ill afford, and I only wish what you congratulate me upon were true. He has no Government appointment whatever, and came up to be the Editor of the *Quarterly Review*, and we only hope some good thing may turn up in time. Meanwhile we have taken this house, furnished, till next December, I having the pleasant prospect of a confinement before me this May. Johnny has been extremely delicate from the effects of the Hooping-Cough, which he had last May,

but I trust the fine weather and milder climate will have a good effect upon him. The spring months here are so different from Scotland. You may well think how sad I was to leave home, and now, after all this sad business, how much more anxious I feel that we were all together, though everything in the long run may turn out for the best. I fain hope that the report, for as yet it is but a report, of Walter's Regiment going to India,¹ may turn out untrue, as it would be a great distress to us his going, which he would do. Charles is still at Oxford, and must remain there some years longer, I believe. Papa, Mamma, and Anne are in the very best possible spirits. Papa nothing can shake, and he looks forward with the greatest confidence to what must be a future life of study and labour, to make up what is gone of his fortune, and he has the sympathy of the whole kingdom.

Let me hear from you soon, and

¹ Walter did not go to India till seven years after his father's death.

believe me ever to remain yours very affectionately,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

25 Pall Mall,
Monday.

XXVI

May 19, 1826.

ABBOTSFORD, Friday morning.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I should have written to you before this, but was not able. All is over now, and poor Mamma left this place for ever last Monday.¹ She had been ill for many months, but for the last two was confined to her room. Still, though great danger was apprehended, it was not the opinion of the medical men that it would be so sudden. Poor Papa was obliged to leave her, to attend his duty in Edinburgh. Two days after his departure, she got

¹ See Journal, May 15 to May 30; Lockhart, vol. iv., pp. 507-14, chap. lxx., passages to be read, not quoted. Sir Walter dearly loved the wife, who, literary gossips with strange impertinence tell us, was not good enough for him. He found her good enough.

much worse and suffered very great pain indeed; for the three last days it was so very terrible that I thank God that I was the only one of her family with her. Dr. Clarkson agreed with me in not sending for Papa till all was over, as it would have only hurt him, and poor Mamma was sensible to nothing but pain. About five in the morning she fell asleep, and so gentle were her last moments, that I thought she was still asleep when it was all over. You can have no idea, my dear Miss Millar, what a blessing I felt it to be. Had Mamma died in one of those fits of agony, I never could have borne it. Papa, thank God, is quite well, and both of my brothers have been here, but were obliged to leave us to-day. Poor Walter, whom we did not expect, arrived at a dreadful moment, just when the funeral service had begun. He had travelled in great haste from Ireland, and has suffered much from the shock. When I was allowed to see him on Tuesday he was so pale and thin I could scarcely have

known him. I see you do not know that Sophia has been confined for more than a month. We have had the satisfaction of hearing that, though much distressed, she has not suffered in her health. She is now at Brighton, for the health of poor Johnnie, for it has been one of the distresses of this melancholy year, poor Johnnie's health, which is very precarious. He is, however, much the better of the sea air, and we hear better accounts of his health every day. I trust the youngest boy, *Walter Scott*, will be stronger. I hope to see Sophia at Brighton in July. Papa was obliged to go to London, and Dr. Clarkson recommends change of air for me, as I have not been well for a long time,¹ and the dreadful shock I received has made me very weak and nervous, but I now feel the fine weather doing me good, and I am

¹ See Letter xxxvii. It is doubtful whether Anne ever fully recovered from the shock of losing her mother, any more than she did from the shock of her father's death. She had not the firmness of Sophia, and had been ailing for some time. (See Letter xix., and Lockhart, vol. iii., pp. 507-11, chap. lxix.)

sure in some weeks I will be as well as possible. Papa leaves here for Edinburgh to-morrow, but my cousin, Anne Scott, who arrived, to my great delight, a few days ago, and I, will remain here for the few weeks he must be away. Is there no chance, my dear Miss Millar, of your being in Scotland? We shall be at Abbotsford, I trust, in the middle of August, to receive my brother and his wife; so I hope, if you are able, you will pay us a visit. Charles will also be down with us, and you will find your old friends, the Miss Russells, settled at Ashestiel, so I think you cannot do better than come here this summer. I am afraid you will not be able to read this, as I can scarcely hold my pen, but I did not like to delay answering your kind enquiries any longer. Papa and I unite in kind regards, and believe me with much esteem to remain yours affectionately,

ANNE SCOTT.

XXVII

25 PALL MALL,
5th November 1826.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I was very sorry indeed to have missed you on your return from Scotland, particularly as we came up to town only a few days after you had called. Lockhart and myself enjoyed our little excursion very much indeed. We went over from Brighton to Dieppe; then, after spending a day at Rouen, got to Paris, where we remained about ten days, seeing everything we could in that short time, and, I assure you, we were not idle; and returned by Boulogne to Dover. Since we brought John here I have not thought him looking so well, and in consequence have sent him and his nurse to pay a visit to a relation of Lockhart's a few miles from town, for a fortnight. By that time a house we have taken on Wimbledon Common for the winter months will be ready to receive us, as we mean, for John's health, to live in the country,

and have only a lodging in town, where Mr. Lockhart may have letters and papers sent, and where we can remain a few days at, when we are engaged in town. Papa and Anne, after remaining a week with us, went to Paris last Thursday week.¹ We expect them back in a few days, though I much fear their stay will be very short, the weary Parliament House requiring Papa's presence in Edinburgh. I think I never saw Papa in better health, and his spirits quite wonderful. He dined with the King at Windsor the day after he arrived, and met with a most gracious reception. You ask me about my Baby Walter.² I assure you he is one of the stoutest fellows for

¹ They left Dover on October 26, and spent about a week in Paris, where the French were 'literally outrageous in their civilities.' The object of Sir Walter's journey was to collect additional materials for the *Life of Napoleon*, now nearly finished. He probably also wished to give Anne and himself a change of scene and surroundings, for the summer in desolate Abbotsford must have been a sad one. The change seems to have done both of the travellers good. It was followed by a visit to Charles at Brasenose, which recalled to Sir Walter the memories of twenty-five years back, when he first saw Oxford. (Lockhart, vol. v., pp. 51-76, chap. lxxii.)

² Baby Walter, born 1827, became a soldier, a cornet of

his months you ever saw : is thought very good looking. John is certainly much stronger, and altogether better than he was, and I fain hope patience and care will yet make him grow a stout boy : he is still kept almost entirely in a horizontal position, but as he has grown very tall, and has the best possible spirits, I have every hope of his doing well under Mr. Shaw's care. With regard to Jessy Hoy, I have not the very least remembrance of such a name, though it may happen, seeing so many people at Abbotsford, we may have forgot, Anne's memory on the subject being the same as mine. If you write to me after the 17th of December, address to the care of John Murray, Esq., Albemarle Street, as we shall have left this house, and I do not know the Wimbledon address. Mr. Lockhart joins me in best compliments, and believe me to remain very affectionately yours,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

dragoons, and died, unmarried, in 1853. He succeeded to his uncle's estates, but not to the baronetcy, which became extinct on the death of the second Sir Walter in 1847.

I was quite glad to hear from Anne you felt so comfortable in your present situation.

XXVIII

ABBOTSFORD,

Sunday morning, August 1827.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I take a great deal of shame to myself at not having written to you before.

I received your letter last night, and am very sorry indeed to hear that you are to leave Mr. —.

Have you any idea of coming down to Scotland? I hope if you do, that you will pay us a visit; we shall be at home all the Autumn, and it will give Papa and myself much pleasure to see you here.

In regard to your wish about another situation, I have written this morning to a most active, bustling, good-natured woman, a Mrs. Hughes. Dr. Hughes is one of the residents at St. Paul's. She is so fond of Papa that she would do any-

thing, or take any trouble, for him, and as she is in good society in London, and a dear friend of the Duchess of Buckingham, she might be in the way of hearing of something that might suit you. Mrs. Murray wished a lady to educate her children, but that, I am sure, would never suit ; she is such a disagreeable person.

We are a very happy family party just now ; Charles and the Lockharts are here. Sophia is quite well ; she will remain with us till the end of October. The children are both here. Johnnie, I am truly happy to say, is a very great deal better, indeed in point of health he is as well as possible, and the doctors say that, when he grows up, the deformity of the spine will never be discovered. The youngest boy is a perfect beauty, and, what is better, is very healthy. Charles is quite well ; he has taken his degree at Oxford, and, I suppose, will get some situation in the Diplomatic Line.¹ We have been

¹ Charles Scott, 'whose spotless worth tenderly endeared him to the few who knew him intimately, and whose in-

much shocked at the death of poor Mr. Canning;¹ he was a very old friend of Papa's, and he feels his loss very deeply.

dustry and accuracy were warmly acknowledged by his professional superiors,' was appointed to a clerkship in the Foreign Office in 1827, and in 1831 was attached to the embassy at Naples, where he received his father on his visit there. In 1841 he accompanied Sir John M'Neill on a mission to the Court of Persia, and died of fever at Teheran, almost immediately on his arrival there, in October 1841, in his thirty-sixth year, six years before his elder brother. (Lockhart, 'Addenda' to the *Life*.)

¹ Canning died on August 8, 1827. The news of his death reached Abbotsford on August 10, and under date August 11 is entered in Scott's *Journal* his 'appreciation' of Canning, 'the witty, the accomplished, the ambitious.' Under date April 17, 1828, he relates a strange story, difficult to believe, about Canning's conversion from revolutionary opinions to the Anti-Jacobin faith. Scott, though a high Tory, and, at the end of his life, a bitter one, yet shows in 1827 that he perceived the necessity of some concessions to the Whigs and Democrats. He writes: 'There are repairs in the structure of our constitution which ought to be made at this season, and without which the people will not long be silent: a pure Whig administration would probably play the devil, by attempting a thorough repair.' Till his nerves and judgment were impaired by overwork and trouble, he held the most rational of political creeds, though he would probably have scorned the name Liberal Conservative, had it been invented in his time. His hatred of revolution and his aristocratic sentiments were controlled by a strong sense of justice, affection for the 'lower' classes, as he would certainly have called them, knowledge of their virtues as well as of their faults, and by great practical sagacity; for he was a man of affairs, and did not live in a

You have the Duchess of St. Alban's near you, I suppose. How does the poor little Duke look? She sent Papa a most magnificent gold inkstand.

I daresay the marriage will turn out very well, for, though he is a great fool, yet he is very good-natured. Now, my dear Miss Millar, I must conclude, as the carriage is at the door. We have had a great deal of company, and the house is quite full. I do not know what I am writing, as there is a Russian, General Yarminoff, talking half french and half english to me, while Papa and the other gentlemen are talking Politicks, to say nothing of the screams of Master Walter, whom Lockhart has put on my chair. All this must be my excuse

dreamland of abstractions, poetical or political. Adolphus writes (Lockhart, vol. v., p. 346, chap. lxxx.) that in his earlier days 'Sir Walter could look manfully and philosophically at those changes in the aspect of society which time and the progress, well or ill-directed, of the human mind were uncontrollably working out, though the innovations might not in some of their results accord with his own tastes and opinions.' He wrote and spoke in favour of Catholic Emancipation in 1829 (vol. v., p. 239, chap. lxxvii.). Two years later he was pelted and cursed by the mob of Jedburgh for his strenuous opposition to the Reform Bill.

for this wretched scrawl. I hope to hear soon from you, and with kindest regards from Sophia, Papa, and Lockhart, believe me to remain yours affectionately,

A. SCOTT.

Sophia has been also bit with the french mania, for she has a french nursery-maid for the little boys.

I should write to the Scotch Lady Gray, as she is a person who is likely to know what would suit you.

XXIX

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,¹—I have only an instant to tell you I wrote, the minute I received your letter, to an English friend, that I thought would be likely to be of use to you, and have just received an answer from her, wishing your present address for a friend of hers, a Mrs. Twining, Clapham Common, who is in want of a person to

¹ This letter is worth publishing as showing Sophia's inexhaustible kindness and patience in dealing with Miss Millar's frequent appeals for help in trouble.

instruct her young ladies, who are very delicate. This I have sent her by this post, so you may expect to hear from Mrs. Twining in a day or two, and I hope her situation will be such as you will like. My friend desires me to tell you a more amiable person does not exist than Mrs. Twining, or one who more completely considers the happiness or comfort of all under her roof. We are all well here, but I must conclude in haste not to lose a post. Believe me to remain very sincerely yours,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

ABBOTSFORD,
Thursday, September 26, 1827.

XXX

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—Thank you very much for your kind enquiries. I am much better now, but suffered a good deal from a cold; however, Dr. Ross has quite *set me up* again. We have been leading a most solitary life. Papa is very busy, and,

I think, in bad spirits about the state of *the times*, and he does nothing when he does speak but *croak about them*.¹ I miss the Lockharts and my brothers very much, but they are all well and happy, which is a great comfort. The Lockharts are in London, and Johnny has gone to a day school a few doors from Sophia. It is to a gentleman who educates boys for Eton. Johnny delights in the school, and they

¹ See note I, p. 127. All things were 'against him.' The State, he thought, was on the brink of ruin; his health was much broken by two attacks, though slight, of apoplexy in the spring and autumn of the year; and he had become conscious of the failure of his powers. He was 'shaking hands with death,' to use his own words; not afraid of death so much as of the fate of Swift and Marlborough, should he linger on 'a driveller and a show.' One thing had greatly cheered him. At a meeting of his trustees and creditors held on December 17, it was announced that his debt was reduced to £54,000; in five years he had made, largely by the work which had shattered his health, about £70,000. His creditors passed the following resolution: 'That Sir Walter Scott be requested to accept of his furniture, plate, linens, paintings, library, and curiosities of every description, as the best means the creditors have of expressing their very high sense of his most honourable conduct, and in grateful acknowledgment for the unparalleled and most successful exertions he has made and continues to make for them.' He accepted the offer, the only offer of assistance he had not rejected, in a modest, half-pathetic, half-humorous letter of great dignity. (Lockhart, vol. v., pp. 298-99, chap. lxxix.)

say it is surprising how much he has learnt, poor little fellow. Little Walter also goes for an hour (?), but he treads the path of learning with *slow steps*, having only learnt after many lessons to spell *so*. Baby, I am ashamed to say, has got on before him in her learning at home with the Nurse.

My brother Walter is distinguishing himself in getting hold of the incendiaries, etc., etc., at Birmingham, where he is quartered, and I think the active life he leads does him good, as we hear of no cough or no complaint of any sort. Charley is at Naples; he is attaché to our Embassy there, and the Ambassador is so kind to him. He has given him rooms in his Palazzo; in short, nothing can be happier than Charley, and the warm climate has quite cured his rheumatism.

You did not say if you still think of changing your present quiet mode of life. I hope you will pay us a visit here soon, that is to say, if you don't object to our absolute solitude. We have only an engagement at Mertoun for a few days on the first of

January ; after that time we shall be most happy to see you. I find my cousin Henry Scott¹ has gone without giving me a frank for this, so I shall send it as it is, and believe me to remain yours affectionately,

ANNE SCOTT.

ABBOTSFORD,
Wednesday,
[*November or December ?*] 1830.

XXXI

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I can't think how such storms rise. 'There has been no such, or nothing of that sort, though God knows there has been distress enough.

Papa has had another attack of apoplexy,² and now, though quite well, and almost the same as when you saw him, the

¹ Henry Francis Scott, younger of Harden, M.P. for Roxburghshire, and Anne's cousin in the wide Scottish sense.

² This attack occurred on April 16. It 'was greatly more severe than any that had gone before it.' Anne's words are almost the same as those in which her father records this illness in his Diary. (Lockhart, vol. v., pp. 326-7, chap. lxxx.)

frequent occurrence of that dangerous complaint of course must make us *very uneasy*. He was in great danger one night, and I sent for Dr. Abercrombie, who came immediately. He did nothing, however, as he found Dr. Clarkson had done everything that was right, but enforced upon him the necessity there is of living very low. Dr. A. says Papa's constitution is so excellent that he may live twenty years, if he will only take care of himself. At present he lives on soup, porridge, bread, etc., etc., but no meat, or nothing stronger than water to drink.

Walter arrived last night, which is a great comfort to me, and I expect Sophia and two children upon Tuesday by the steamboat. Lockhart is standing for some Borough or other, but we have not heard if he has gained his election. I wish my letter could reach you in time to take a walk to the Pier, and see Sophia arrive, but I fear it will be *too late*. She comes by the Soho Steam Packet. It will be a great pleasure indeed for me to see the

children again. I am much better myself. Dr. Abercrombie complimented me much on my improvement, notwithstanding I had been up three nights, but one can do a great deal when one is well.

By the way, I must tell you, my dear Miss Millar, that after *mature deliberation* I rejected my little ——,¹ but he has got over it, and is going to be married, which I am glad of, to a lady with a great deal of money, which I found *afterwards* would be *very* necessary, so I am sure it will all be for the best. I need *not say* don't mention this.

I have not done so, even to Walter and Sophia, as I don't think it fair to a gentleman who has paid you what he considers as great a compliment as he can pay. The country is beginning to look so very pretty. I hope you will come and pay us a visit in summer, and that you will find us in a happier state than we were when you were here, or, I am sorry to say, *now*.

Still I trust in God this may also pass

¹ See Introduction.

away. I have had a miserable anxious time of it.

The Russell's were well when I saw them, and —— Ferguson's much the same. Will you tell everybody Papa *is much better*. They make such horrid reports I thought it better to tell you the truth about apoplexy, but it will be better not to mention it. Many people have lived after more frequent and worse attacks than Papa's. I have written this in great haste, so do excuse it. I shall be glad to hear from you again, and was most happy to hear Mrs. Ross was better. I was much alarmed about her. Yours very affectionately,

A. SCOTT.

ABBOTSFORD,

Sunday, May 3, 1831.

XXXII

24 SUSSEX PLACE, REGENT'S PARK,

10th January 1832.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—Many thanks for your kind enquiries. We have both

been much shocked, but are now as well as you would expect us to be after all we have gone through. To add to it all, the Baby, as she still is called, fell on the stairs a week ago, and broke her arm under the elbow; it was set the same evening, and she is doing as well as possible, no fever, and as merry as possible; but you may think what a sad fright it gave us, particularly when nerves were far from strong. I heard yesterday from Charles, who is at Naples. He says the Barham with Papa, Anne, and Walter was arrived in the bay, but, from the strict quarantine, he was only allowed to row round the ship, and see them on deck. They were all well, had remained three weeks at Malta, and been five days on their voyage to Naples. They were to be released from quarantine in a few days, so I hope to receive letters very soon. I have every hope change of scene and climate will do both Papa and Anne good: another winter at Abbotsford would never have done for them: already Papa is much the better of his voyage. I

wish you saw my Walter now ; he is grown very tall, and as handsome as ever. I cannot say much for his learning as yet : he is begun to learn to read, but you know I am no friend to early tuition, and he is not six till the middle of April. We have no plans fixed for next summer, but if we come, I shall take care to let you know. With all kind wishes from us both, believe me to remain yours very affectionately,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.¹

¹ In Lockhart (vol. v., pp. 352-417, chaps. lxxx. and lxxxi.) an account is given of the last—not quite the last—days at Abbotsford ; of Sir Walter's voyage to Malta and Naples in the *Barham*, a King's ship placed at his disposal by the Admiralty ; of his visit to Rome, Florence, and Venice, and return to England by a route which took him through the Tyrol, and down the Rhine from Mayence. After an absence of seven months, he reached England on the 13th of June in a 'hopeless state of mind and body.' About four weeks later he was taken to Abbotsford, at his own earnest request. The return to his beloved home revived him for a time. 'I have seen much,' he said, 'but nothing like my ain house.' He lingered on for two months, suffering, apparently, no bodily pain ; his mind, though hopelessly obscured, appeared when there was any symptom of consciousness to be dwelling on serious and solemn things. He often murmured to himself stanzas of the '*Dies Iræ*,' and of '*Stabat mater dolorosa*.' On September 21 he died, literally falling asleep.

Lockhart's description of the last year of Sir Walter's

XXXIII

ST. JAMES'S HOTEL, JERMYN STREET,
Saturday, June 30, 1832.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—My poor father continues in the same hopeless state of mind and body, and indeed we pray the sad scene may soon close, as the physician gives us no hope of his recovery, though

life is inexpressibly pathetic, the pathos heightened by the gallant struggle he maintained against pain, depression, and increasing infirmity. Chapters lxxx. and lxxxi. are full of incidents of varied interest, moving alternately laughter and tears, or something very like them; giving glimpses of light on foreign society, and the condition of Italy seventy years ago, and the modes of travelling in those leisurely times. We can read in these chapters of Wordsworth's last visit to Scott, the occasion of 'Yarrow revisited,' and of the exquisite sonnet beginning 'A trouble, not of clouds or weeping rain,' and ending with the charge to the winds of ocean to 'waft to soft Parthenope' him with whom went the 'might of the whole world's good wishes.' Scott's mind dwelt much on the parallel between himself and his brother novelists, Fielding and Smollett, who had been driven abroad by declining health; an ominous parallel. Wordsworth 'expressed his regret that neither of those great masters of romance appeared to have been surrounded with any due marks of respect in the close of life.' It was not so with Scott. No great man was ever received in any country with an affectionate enthusiasm like that with which Sir Walter was received in Italy. Voltaire, indeed, made a triumphant entry into

his extreme strength of body may make his case a lingering one. Should he ever be able to be moved from the bed he now is on, we shall bring him down to Abbotsford, and I shall accompany him; his case is one no Physician can calculate on an hour or a year, and, could you see him, you would, like his family, pray the latter might not be the great man's portion. Anne has suffered much, and is in a very delicate state of health,¹ and till all this is over we cannot expect much improvement.

Paris, but he must have had there bitter enemies as well as devoted friends. Sir Walter had no enemies in Rome or Naples. The Barham, in which Sir Walter, his eldest son, and his daughter Anne sailed, was one of the smartest ships in the service. One smiles to read that 'the officers of the ship thought Sir Walter must gain more addition to his fame from having been a passenger on board the Barham than they, or she, could possibly receive even from having taken on board such a guest.'

It is significant that Sir Walter took but a languid interest in classical antiquities. He called Pompeii 'The City of the Dead,' and was moved only by the sight of memorials of feudal times, of 'battles long ago' between knights and Saracens, and of the romance of the Middle Ages; by the memorials also which he saw in Rome of a later romance, the story of the Stuarts.

¹ See Letter xxxvii.

Both Charles and Walter are here, and we are thankful we are all together, in a first-rate quiet Hotel, with the best medical assistance London can give.

Excuse shaking hand and haste, as Papa has no nurses but his children night and day, and believe me to remain your friend,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

XXXIV

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—You will have seen the melancholy termination of our journey by the newspapers, which in this instance tell the truth.

The medical people, finding nothing of avail, have sent us down to Scotland, and, thank God, we arrived here yesterday. Poor Papa bore the journey *wonderfully well*, and though he was unconscious of being here yesterday, to-day he knew W. Laidlaw,¹ and was sensible he was in

¹ He recognised Laidlaw, and, ‘resting his eye on him, said, “Ha! Willie Laidlaw! O man, how often have I thought of you!”’ There is some variation between Lock-

the Hall. Should it please God to prolong his life, he is far better here, and for my sister and myself it is *such a comfort*.

Lockhart is with us also. They are both wonderfully well, and so am I, though I suffered at first from the great rapidity with which we travelled from Rome. I write these few lines in his room, and it is near four in the morning, which must be my excuse for their being so ill written, as I am very sleepy; but I was sure you would be anxious, so think it better to write little than none, and ever believe

hart's and Laidlaw's accounts of this recognition, but they are essentially the same. (Lockhart, vol. v., p. 422, chap. lxxxiii., and *Abbotsford Notanda, ad finem*). William Laidlaw knew Scott for thirty years, and saw more of him and in more varied ways than did any other of his friends. He was himself no mean poet; a Border man, who helped Scott in collecting ballads for the *Minstrelsy*, managed his estates, and was his amanuensis, sometimes his literary critic, after the beginning of 1819. There are many interesting things in the *Abbotsford Notanda*; descriptions of Scott's abounding gaiety in his youth, a gaiety which he never entirely lost; of his strength and activity shown in rambles and climbs with Laidlaw and the Ettrick Shepherd; of his personal appearance, his massive and athletic frame despite of the lame leg; of his long upper lip, and of the look in his eyes, dreamy, shrewd, humorous, warlike, in his different moods.

me, my dear Miss Millar, to remain yours
affectionately, ANNE SCOTT.

ABBOTSFORD, *14th July*, 1832.

XXXV

ABBOTSFORD,
September 21, 1832.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—You will be distressed to hear that my poor father died here this afternoon at one o'clock, without much apparent suffering.

Sophia bears up very well, and Anne, tho' much shocked, will, I trust, in time be calmer. Very truly yours,

CHARLES SCOTT.

XXXVI

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I would have written to you before this, but indeed I was quite unable. And even now I cannot dwell on the past without great pain, and I know how much you must have felt for him who is gone, and how kindly

you do for us. I am at present staying with Sophia, and will remain with her till the end of winter, at least that is my present plan. Both Lockhart and Sophia are quite well, and so are the children,¹ who are such a comfort and amusement. I see the newspapers announced we were staying at Rokeby Park. We were only there for a few hours on our way up. There were papers to be signed, etc., etc. We came up to town a different road from what we used to do, and I was very much pleased with the Cathedral at York, which I had never seen before. I had meant at first to have come up by the steamboat, and then I would have seen you, but I dreaded even passing through Edinburgh. I fear it will be long before I visit Scotland again, and I do regret many friends I have left there, particularly the Miss Russells, who were very kind indeed to me during our dreadful distress. If it is

¹ Hugh Littlejohn had passed away on December 15, 1831. There were only two children now in Lockhart's house, Walter and Charlotte.

not troublesome to you, I wish you would write to me and say what your plans are, but I suppose you will not stir from home till your poor mother's better. What a wretched year this has been for sickness and distress in every way, and when I look back to it, I can scarcely believe it possible I have gone through so many strange and awful scenes. This day last year we embarked for Malta, and had every hope that change of climate would restore him to health, but that was not God's will; and now, my dear Miss Millar, I must conclude this hurried letter. Lockhart is wanting me to help him about putting up some books, and is very impatient. Both him and Sophia desire to unite with me in kind regards to you, and ever believe me to remain affectionately yours,

ANNE SCOTT.

Friday morning, October 19, 1832,
24 SUSSEX PLACE, REGENT'S PARK.

XXXVII

24 SUSSEX PLACE,

June 26, 1833.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I am sure you will be truly distressed to hear that we have lost your friend and pupil Ann, who died here yesterday morning at 11 o'clock.

Poor Ann had latterly been very delicate, and, I think, never recovered the shock of my father's death. She had been complaining and in bed for some time, but the medical men foresaw no danger, till about 10 days ago, when she was seized with brain fever which terminated fatally.

Sophia bears this severe blow with firmness and resignation. Walter has not yet come from Ireland. I am with great truth very sincerely yours,

CHARLES SCOTT.

XXXVIII

RAMSGATE, 4 SPENCER PLACE,

July 16, 1833.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—Your kind

letter followed me here, where the Doctors ordered me for change of air and warm sea-bathing, and we have taken the house for a month or two, should we like to remain, but the address to Sussex Place will find me always wherever I may be. God knows the change was very necessary after the great shock I have received, and time alone can reconcile, or indeed make me feel she is gone, for it is difficult to believe it, so sudden the danger was at last, although she was ill all winter; but I must think it was the beginning of the brain fever, which was her end. She never suffered any pain, and for the last four days was in a stupor; before that, hardly was sensible from the first. I was alarmed, and had all the physicians in town, and they were hopeless from the first of perfect recovery of her senses, even if her youth and strength of constitution had brought her through, and God knows that would have been worse than death. The children are well, and enjoy the sea-bathing very much indeed, and I am already

much the better for it. This is a very nice place, and we have the great comfort of not knowing a soul, with the exception of old Coleridge, the poet, who lives near; and, if we like to look at the Continent, there are steam boats every hour. I hope you are doing well, and have got some boarders. I fear it will be long ere I have heart to be in Scotland again. Charles is gone into Wales for a month to see some of his old school friends; he was a great deal better in health than I have seen him for long. Walter is quartered at Kilkenny; he got leave for the funeral, but was recalled to Ireland the day after. God bless you, dear Miss Millar. Your affectionate friend,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

XXXIX

24 SUSSEX PLACE, REGENT'S PARK,
20th February 1834.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I write you a few hurried lines by Mr. William Lock-

hart, who goes to Edinburgh upon business. My husband lost his poor mother last month after a long illness; he only was in Scotland for the funeral, having been obliged to return here upon business. The children are in high form, stouter than they have been any winter before. We are talking of sending Walter to school after Easter, but can hardly bear the thought of parting with him. The little girl is really getting very pretty, and is very clever. Brother Walter has been here, for a few days only, being obliged to return to Ireland to take the command of the regiment upon Lord ——'s dismissal. I am sorry to say this does him no good; harm indeed, as it is a rule in the service no officer in a regiment can rise by his Colonel being dismissed by a Court Martial;¹ however, he has been so highly

¹ Lockhart ('Addenda' to the *Life*, vol. v., p. 464) writes: 'His answers when examined as a witness before a celebrated Court Martial in 1834 were universally admired.' His promotion came later when in 1839 'he proceeded to Madras as Lieutenant-Colonel of the 15th Hussars, and subsequently commanded that regiment. He was beloved

praised for his conduct and temper on the occasion, I hope some time hence he may have an opportunity of being promoted. Charles, for him, has been pretty well this winter, although worked very hard at the Foreign Office, Sunday and Saturday all the same; he hardly is able to dine with me. I do not know what our summer plans will be: if we remain in this house a little painting and papering will be necessary, and will oblige me to go out of town for a couple of months, but where I do not know, and it will depend upon many circumstances. Miss Macdonald Buchanan has been staying some time with me this winter, to my great delight, but since her return to Edinburgh has had the scarlet fever, poor soul. Let me hear what you are about, and believe me to remain yours in haste,

SOPHIA LOCKHART.

and esteemed in it by officers and men as much, I believe, as any gentleman ever was in any corps of the British army, and there was no officer of his rank who stood higher in the opinion of the heads of his profession.' (Lockhart, *ibidem*.)

XL

24 SUSSEX PLACE, REGENT'S PARK,

7th December 1834.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I am sorry to hear so indifferent an account of your boarder, and the more so, as I fear I can give you no assistance in the matter. The Countess Duchess of Sutherland, for such she styles herself, is not in town, or, if she were, I could hardly take the liberty of interfering in her family arrangements; it must be done by a mutual friend, or a relative of both parties, and were it done, I fear, if she is so flighty as you represent her, all would not do. I was very sorry to miss you, but hope another year to return, should a general election take place, of which there is every prospect. A month hence Lockhart will have to make a run down to Roxboroughshire to vote, but I should not think will have time to visit Edinburgh. I shall remain here quietly. We enjoyed our little tour in Scotland, and six weeks we spent at Rokeby on our

return, very much, and it did us all a world of good. We found our house quite beautiful, all new painted and papered; it is a dreadful operation to anticipate, but so comfortable when done. Walter has returned to school, which is better than a mile from this. He lives there, but comes home every Saturday, and returns Sunday evening; he likes it much, and grows a stout boy, and very handsome. Charlotte also goes across the street to a ladies' school for a few hours a day, and gets on very well; she is very clever, and will be very pretty. I wish I could have shown you both, but Inverleith Place was such a distance. I saw few or none of my friends the few days I was in town. Charles is in town, hard-worked at the Foreign Office; I hope amidst all these changes something may turn up good for him. I think he is in better health than I have before seen him this winter. Walter is stationed at Dublin with his regiment, and, as the Colonel is absent on leave, there is no chance of his coming over this

winter. I am almost ashamed to send a letter with no news, but none is here. Peel is expected to-day, or may have arrived last night, and then the fate of the Tory side will be decided; should the Ultras join Sir Robert, he will do, but if a split takes place, all is over; he will not have six months' reign.¹

I trust to hear you have a more promising boarder than Miss Stuart, and shall be most glad to hear from you. Meantime I always am very affectionately yours,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

XLI

24 SUSSEX PLACE,
14th April 1835.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—Being so far from the spot, I feel it almost impossible to form an opinion as to what you should do about your house. I think, were I

¹ Sophia proved herself a prophetess, and capable of 'intelligent anticipation.' The position of her husband as Editor of the *Quarterly Review* must have given her access to much political information.

you, I should run no risk, unless you had the promise of more stationary and richer lodgers than Miss Stuart. I have been so long from Edinburgh, I feel I know nobody there, and hardly the ways, and fear I can be of no use, however willing. If you indeed could get some young people who were to be educated, it might answer, but I know of none at present wanting that accommodation. I believe Walter hopes to get leave for a month, and spend it at Abbotsford, but there is not the very least chance of our being there, or in Scotland, this year. We shall only be absent from London the six weeks of little Walter's holidays, and these will be spent at the seaside, likely at Boulogne. The pain of seeing Abbotsford in its changed state would be so great, that I now fancy nothing would tempt me to visit it again, not a creature left in the neighbourhood I knew, except poor Margaret Ferguson, and the poor soul is not very sane. Our children are stronger this year than usual; Walter, a great tall boy, will be nine years

old this week : he is at school near us, but returns home every Saturday and Sunday. Charlotte also spends a few hours every day at a ladies' school close by, and both are doing as well as possible at their studies, and the best possible children. Charles is in the Foreign Office ; as usual very busy, but in better health this spring than the former ones, it being always a trying time of the year to him. It has been a very unhealthy winter ; fevers, small-pox, and all sorts of bad things raging, and nobody escaping Influenza. The Skenes are at Leamington for the health of their second daughter, who now is going to get well. I shall be glad to hear what you determine to do, and remain, dear Miss Millar, very affectionately yours,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

XLII

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I write to you only a few lines to assure you I shall, should I hear of anything that I think

would suit you here, let you know, but I fear I am not likely. The fashion is here so decidedly to send girls to schools whenever they cease to be quite children; and there is a good reason for it in London. Residents' children are so much better in the neighbourhood of town than in town itself, and families (I speak generally of those I know) employ, whilst children are young, a daily governess, which would never suit you in any respect, and, unless a certain bargain were made, would be a great risk. I can only again say, should I hear of anything likely, I shall let you know. Our plans are quite undecided for the summer, but I think we shall a month hence go to the seaside, *where* unknown. Lockhart, I am sorry to say, has had a bad attack of Lumbago, which has made him look thin and worn, but a little sea air, or, what is better for him, his going abroad for a month and leaving me and the children by the seaside in this neighbourhood, will, I trust, quite set him up. The children are quite well—Walter at school

and Charlotte going to a ladies' school across the street for a few hours a day. Walter only comes home Saturday, and remains until Sunday evening at home. Charles has been unwell, but this very cold weather is death to rheumatic people, and he has been better this season than he has ever been before in England. Walter is in Ireland, and I hardly think will be in Scotland this year. Let me hear from you should you close with anything that will suit you. Our address here will find us wherever we go, and believe me to remain yours very sincerely,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

24 SUSSEX PLACE, REGENT'S PARK,

1st June 1835.

XLIII

24 SUSSEX PLACE, REGENT'S PARK,

30th March 1836.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I take this private opportunity of writing you a few lines to express my pleasure at receiving

your letter that you were fairly domiciled at Charleton. I had a long letter from Miss Adam on the subject, and feel sure you cannot fail to be comfortable with any relation of such good people. With regard to our being in Scotland this summer, it is likely, and I am determined, if we do, to pay a visit to Blair Adam, so shall, I hope, be able to see you. Our children are well in health, and have got over winter without hardly a cold, and, partial though I must be, I think you will be much pleased with them in all respects. Walter is very tall, all his curls cut off, which is distressing; but, in spite of having lost the beauty of childhood, and not attained that of boyhood, he is a boy no one can overlook, and every day, more and more reminds me of my father. He is getting well on at school, and, if spared to us, will never have cost an anxiety, except for health, for a more honourable high-spirited child never lived. Both have this character, and I am sure you would be delighted with them. Walter I expect to-day from

school for Easter week, and we are all very happy. Charles has suffered very much this winter from violent inflammation in his eyes, but is better, and returned to his work at the Foreign Office. He thinks himself better now in health than before the attack, but it has been long and very severe. Walter is with his regiment in Ireland. There is a report that they will be ordered to India next year; perhaps it would be the best thing that could happen to either of my brothers, but it would be a sad parting. And now, dear Miss Millar, I must not lose my opportunity of sending you these few lines, and conclude in haste, remaining very sincerely yours,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

XLIV

63 GRANDE RUE, BOULOGNE-SUR-MER,
7th August 1836.

MY DEAR MISS MILLAR,—Your letter was forwarded to me here, where we have

been a month, and I believe shall remain till the middle or end of October. Walter was so ill in London, a sort of influenza followed by low fever, that the Dr. ordered us to the seaside without losing a day, and we liked this place so much last year that we determined to return, the short distance (only twelve hours' sail from London) being a very great inducement. It has had the desired effect, for Walter gets stronger every day, and swims in the sea; in short, one would not believe he had been ill. Charlotte also thrives, and we all feel much stronger of the sea-bathing. I am very sorry to hear you are again in want of a situation, and think Mrs. Thomson should have mentioned, before she engaged you, her probable plan on Miss Thomson's recovery. I am quite out of the way here of hearing of anything, not knowing anybody, but you may depend upon my writing to you, should anything by chance turn up I think would suit you. The weather here was cold and unsettled for a fortnight, but is now quite beautiful,

and so warm. I hear that my brother Walter and his wife are to be at Abbotsford upon the 20th of this month, to remain a month. He wishes us all much to join him there, but Charles has had his holidays, and will get no farther leave, and I being here makes it out of the question. It may be Mr. Lockhart may go down for a few days, as he has some business, but that will only be if he can spare the time. At any time, if you address to me Sussex Place, it will be forwarded, and most truly happy shall I be to hear you have heard of anything comfortable. With all good wishes, believe me to remain very affectionately yours,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

XLV

LONDON,
May 15, 1837.

DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I know how very sincerely you will sympathise with me when I tell you that your friend Sophia continues, as she has been for more than

two months past, in a very dangerous state. Indeed there is, I fear, but the most slender chance of her recovery. My only comfort at present is that she does not suffer much pain, but all through this long illness nothing could have been more complete than her sweetness, and patience, and thankfulness.

I received a little while ago your very welcome transcripts of Sir Walter's letters to yourself, and let me say that it would afford me a great tho' melancholy satisfaction to possess similar copies of Sophia's early letters, of which you speak so highly.¹

Be assured that, should anything likely to suit your views come under my notice, I shall not fail, for her sake and for your own, to do my best for your service. And believe me ever very truly yours,

J. G. LOCKHART.

¹ It is certain, in my opinion, that some at least of the letters in this collection were transcribed, and the copies sent to Lockhart, and used by him when he wrote the *Life*. Verbal coincidences are sufficient proof that they were part of his materials.

XLVI

SUSSEX PLACE, LONDON,

May 17, 1837.

DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I grieve to inform you that we have lost your old friend and pupil, my sister Sophia, who died this morning at 3 o'clock, after an illness of 3 months.

I send this to Mr. Cadell, trusting that he knows your address. I am always very truly yours,

CHARLES SCOTT.

XLVII¹

LEEDS BARRACKS,

December 18, 1837.

DEAR MISS MILLAR,—I got your letter this morning, and have written to Lady Scott, who is at Mr. Ritchie's, 68 Constitution Street, Leith, mentioning your wishes, and should she hear of anything likely to suit you, she will not fail to acquaint you. I had the great pleasure of spending nearly

¹ On the last few letters published here little or no annotation has been made. They are either too sacred for comment, or written about matters of simple family history which need no explanation. The annotator feels—to compare small things with great, small, that is, in authorship, though not in subject—as Thackeray felt when he finished *The Newcomes*, and, as if he were parting from friends, said good-bye to Laura and Arthur, and Ethel and Clive.

three months at Abbotsford, the first long period of leave that I have been able to spend there, since I left it in 1818, and, although living only in a corner of it, still it was a great luxury to be there at all. There is a great deal of excitement and bad feeling through all this Riding about the New Poor Laws, which keep us in constant hot water, as, whenever a meeting is held, troops are moved up, and concentrated, and this takes place very frequently; so whether I shall be able to fulfil my intentions of being in Edinburgh early next month for a little or not, is still very doubtful; should I, however, succeed in getting away, I shall not fail in calling upon you. The most warlike sound of 'Pots off' strikes upon my ear, and warns me to conclude, if I wish to come in for fish and soup. I remain therefore in haste
yours truly, WALTER SCOTT.

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